SEVEN

by

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The world is a fine place,
and worth fighting for.

- Ernest Hemingway
For Whom the Bell Tolls
1940

EXT. COUNTRY CHURCH -- DAY

The white cross on the church steeple stands against blue sky. The church bell rings, resonating.

Mass has let out. Small church, small congregation. The dirt road in front is lined with pick-up trucks and parishioners on foot heading to outlying farms and homes. An old two-story house sits across the road. Lone.

INT. OLD HOUSE -- DAY

Sunlight comes through the soot on the windows, more brown than bright. SOMERSET, 45, in a suit and tie, stands in this empty second-story room. He looks around, at the ceiling, at the worn wooden floor, at the peeling wallpaper on the walls.

Somerset walks to one wall where the current wallpaper is peeled away to reveal flowery wallpaper underneath. He runs his finger across one of the pale red roses that decorates the older paper. He pushes the grime away, brings the rose out more clearly.

He pulls at the edge of the paper, carefully ripping off a roughly squared section with the rose at its center.

He studies it in his hand.

EXT. OLD HOUSE -- DAY

Birds sing. Somerset stands, pondering the forested landscape.

MAN (O.S.)
Is something wrong?

Somerset does not respond. The MAN, in an ill-fitting real estate jacket, is seated on the hood of a dirty Ford Thunderbird. He holds a check and a booklet of receipts.

MAN (CONT)
Is something the matter?

SOMERSET
No... no. There's nothing wrong.

Somerset still seems distant.

MAN
(writes receipt)
Not that it's any of my business... but, are you figuring on moving out here finally?

SOMERSET
Soon.

MAN
I just never seen a man mortgaging an empty house before.

SOMERSET
Everything here still seems... seems so strange to me. All this.

MAN
I don't know. I'd say this place is about as normal as places get.

The man walks over to hand over a receipt. Somerset accepts the receipt, folds it. Somerset smiles.

SOMERSET
That is exactly what I mean. Strange.

Somerset looks back at the house. The man does not understand.

INT. AMTRACK TRAIN -- DAY -- (CREDIT SEQUENCE BEGINS)

Somerset is in a window seat, smoking a cigarette, looking out the speeding train. He is near the back of the car, away from the few other passengers.

Outside, farms, small homes and lawns pass. The entire panorama is dappled by the rays of the soon setting sun.

The light flickers across Somerset's placid face.

INT. AMTRACK TRAIN -- LATER DAY

The train is nearly full. Somerset has his suitcase on the aisle seat beside him. He has a hardcover book unopened on his lap. He still stares out the window, but his disposition has soured. The train is passing an ugly, swampy field.

A car's burnt-out skeleton sits rusting in the braken. A little further on, two dogs are fighting, circling, attacking, their coated matted with blood.

Somerset turns his head to watch the dogs.

Away in the field, another dog sprints to join the fight.

INT. AMTRACK TRAIN -- EARLY EVENING

Passing urban streets below. Slums. Smashed cars. People stand on the corners, under the bleak glow of street lamps.

Somerset's suitcase is by the window. Somerset is now in the aisle seat, reading his book.

INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT -- LATER NIGHT -- (END CREDITS)

Curtains closed. The SOUNDS of the CITY are here as they will be everywhere in this story. A CAR ALARM SHRIEKS. Somerset's life is packed in many moving boxes, except for clothing in a closet and hundreds of books on shelves.

Somerset, dressed only in his underwear, lays back on the bed. He reaches to the nightstand, to a wooden, pyramidical metronome.

He frees the metronome's weighted swingarm so it moves back and forth. Swings to the left... TICK, swings to the right... TICK. Tick, tick, tick, measured and steady.

Somerset situates on the bed, closes his eyes. The metronome's ticking competes with the sound of the car alarm. Somerset's face tightens as he concentrates on the metronome.

His eyes close tighter.

Tick, tick, tick... the swingarm moves evenly. Somerset's breathing deepens. The car ALARM seems QUIETER.

Tick, tick, tick. Somerset continues his concentration.

The METRONOME is the ONLY SOUND. Somerset's face relaxes slightly as he begins to fall asleep. Tick, tick, tick...

EXT. CHINESE BODEGA / CITY STREETS -- NIGHT

DAVID MILLS, 31, exits with a bagged 40oz bottle of beer. He is a lean, attractive man, constantly coiled, eyes always smoldering. FOLLOW as he walks quickly past iron-gated storefronts. He crosses the street under elevated subway tracks. A train roars overhead.

Mills watches it as he walks on.

Blue sparks spit off the third rail and illuminate Mills, throwing his shadow long down the deserted street.

EXT. URBAN STREET OF ROW HOMES -- NIGHT

This rotting neighborhood lives in the shadow of a single fat skyscraper. Mills walks, looks at the broken refrigerators and pieces of junk in the gutter.

Ahead in the street, TWO YOUNG THUGS struggle with a crowbar to break into the trunk of a parked car.

Mills draws near. One thug looks up, doesn't think Mills will be a problem, continues prying. Mills stops, calm.

MILLS
Is that your car, man?

FIRST THUG
What the fuck do you care?

Mills pauses, switches his beer bottle to his other hand.

MILLS
Does that car belong to you?

The thugs looks at each other, gauging. They face Mills.

FIRST THUG
Yeah, it's my car, alright? Fuck off.

MILLS
You're telling me that's your car?

The second thug starts the long way round the car.

SECOND THUG
You got a problem?

MILLS
Well, for some strange reason, I don't believe you.

Mills gives a "isn't that silly" laugh, shifts his gaze --

Sees the first thug slide the crowbar so it's held as a weapon.

FIRST THUG
(steps forward)
You can fucking suck my...

Mills swiftly finishes that sentence by smashing his bottle against the first thug's head. The thug falls, swings blindly.

The second thug moves from the side, brings out a knife.

Mills averts, swings, pounds the side of his fist into the second thug's face -- CRACK. Broken nose.

The second thug stumbles back, drops the knife, his nose squirting blood.

Mills turns, enraged, breathing hard.

The first thug is screaming, trying to stand. Mills takes one step, punts the first thug's head. The crowbar clatters away.

Mills is in the process of kicking a man while he's down, when the second thug grabs him from behind, pulls him backwards.

Mills clutches at the thug's arm, trying to avoid a choke-hold. They both struggle spastically. The thug's winning.

Gurgling, gasping for air, Mills shifts his weight, drops to one knee and spins the thug, slamming him against the car.

Mills breaks loose, grabs a handful of the second thug's hair and holds the man's head against the car's side window. Mills' free hand pounds the thug's face: once, twice -- third time's the charm as the window shatters. The thug goes out cold.

Mills backs off, still incensed. He rubs his throat, looking at the two prone men. Slowly, he regains some composure.

He takes a keychain from his pocket. He unlocks the door of the car, loads one of the thugs into the back seat. He walks to collect the other thug off the street.

INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- MORNING

Somerset picks items off a moving box: keys, wallet, homicide badge. Finally, he opens the hardcover book from the train.

From the pages, he takes the pale, wallpaper rose.

INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT -- DAY

A wall is stained by a starburst of blood. Somerset stands, melancholy, looking at a body on the floor under a sheet near a sawed-off shotgun. The apartment is gloomy. DETECTIVE TAYLOR, 52, looks through a notebook.

TAYLOR
Neighbors heard them screaming at each other. It was nothing new or unusual. But, then they heard the gun go off. Boom, boom... both barrels.

SOMERSET
Did his wife confess? Did she actually speak the words?

TAYLOR
When the patrolmen got here, she was trying to put his head back together. She was crying too hard to say anything.
(shuts notebook)
Crime of passion.

SOMERSET
Yes. Look at all the passion splattered up on the wall here.

Taylor shifts his weight, impatient, annoyed.

TAYLOR
This is a done deal. All but the paperwork.

Somerset looks at a coloring-book open on the coffee table. There are crayons beside it. Somerset picks the book up.

He flips through: crudely colored pictures.

SOMERSET
Did their son see it happen?

TAYLOR
What kind of question is that? Huh?
(pointing)
He's dead. His wife killed him. There it is. That's all. Anything else has nothing to do with nothing.

Somerset replaces the book, digs up a cigarette from his pocket.

TAYLOR (CONT)
You and your fucking questions, Somerset. I'm glad I'm getting rid of you today. You know that, you fuck?

David Mills enters, dressed in a suit. He looks a bit lost.

MILLS
Uh... Lieutenant Somerset?

Somerset lights his cigarette, looks to Mills.

MILLS (CONT)
I'm David Mills... your new partner.

EXT. TENEMENT/CITY STREET -- DAY

A body-bag is carried through the crowd around the tenement doors. Somerset follows. Mills follows Somerset. They walk towards the end of the filthy block.

MILLS
I'm a little thrown. I just finished orientation at central, and they dumped me off down here.

SOMERSET
I heard you brought in two small-timers last night.

MILLS
Yeah. Two real idiots.

SOMERSET
Since we are just starting out, I thought we could go to a bar. Sit and talk for awhile. That way we can...

MILLS
Excuse me, but I'd rather start sniffing for a case, if it's all the same to you. Seeing how we only have a week for this whole transition thing.
(waits)
I want to get into the shit a.s.a.p., know what I mean?

Somerset walks, no reply. Mills searches to get a read on him.

SOMERSET
I meant to ask you something... when we spoke on the phone. I can't help wondering...
(pause)
Why are you here?

MILLS
(wary)
I... I don't follow.

SOMERSET
All this effort you've gone through, to be transferred from Philadelphia to here. It's the first question that pops into my head.

Mills formulates his response.

MILLS
I'm here for the same reasons as you, I guess. Or... at least the same reasons you used to have for being here...
(cutting)
...before you decided to give up.

Somerset stops and faces Mills.

SOMERSET
You think you know me? You just met me two minutes ago.

MILLS
Maybe I don't understand your question.

SOMERSET
It's very simple. You've come from the "City of Brotherly Love" to the "City of Brotherly Hate," detective. I've never seen it done that way.

MILLS
I don't know. Maybe I thought I could do more good here than there.
(pause)
You know, it'd be great by me if we didn't start right out kicking each other in the balls. But, you're calling the shots, lieutenant, so however you want it to go.

SOMERSET
Let me tell you how I want this to go. I want you to look, and I want you to listen.

MILLS
I wasn't standing around Philly guarding the fucking Liberty Bell.

SOMERSET
But, you have never worked homicide in <u>this</u> city.

MILLS
I realize that.

SOMERSET
Well, please do me the favor of remembering it.

Mills just stares back at Somerset. Somerset walks. Mills rolls his eyes, looks to heaven like, "what'd I do to deserve this?" He follows Somerset.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

MONDAY

INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- EARLY MORNING

Somerset lies asleep on the bed. It is still dark outside. Relatively quiet. The PHONE beside the inactive metronome RINGS HARSHLY. Somerset awakens suddenly, rankled.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- EARLY MORNING

It is barely becoming light outside. Mills can't sleep.

Alone in a double bed. He sits up, frustrated. Sits on the edge of the bed and looks around. The room is a shambles, filled with moving boxes.

The light coming through the window glows upon a football trophy on one box. Large and noble, a golden player stands in frozen motion at the trophy's pinnacle.

Mills looks at the trophy and a fond smile forms on his face. The CLINKING of DISHES and SILVERWARE is HEARD from another room. Mills looks at the closed bedroom door, troubled.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM/KITCHENETTE -- MORNING

Across a living room full of boxes, TRACY MILLS, 30, a beautiful woman, stands in her bathrobe. She's upset about something, takes dishes out of boxes, puts them on the kitchenette counter.

She pulls a mug from a clump of newspaper and pours some tea from a pot on the stove. Blowing on the steaming tea, she leans back on the counter, looks over at the closed bedroom door.

The tea is too hot to sip, and as Tracy is placing the mug on the counter behind her the PHONE RINGS. Startled, she releases the mug too close to the edge. It falls --

Crashes to the floor, shatters.

INT. APARTMENT/CRIME SCENE, HALLWAY -- MORNING

A dark hall. Somerset and Mills stand with OFFICER DAVIS, 28, a beefy, uniformed cop. Light from a camera's flash spills in from the nearby kitchen. Davis hands Somerset two flashlights.

SOMERSET
At what time did you confirm the death?

DAVIS
Like I said, we didn't touch anything, but we were on scene at like o-five-hundred, so he's had his face in a plate of spaghetti for about half an hour.

MILLS
Wait, wait, wait. You didn't check him? You didn't check vital signs?

DAVIS
Believe me, he's gone. Unless he's breathing spaghetti sauce now.

MILLS
No. The point is, when you're first man in, you check vital signs.

DAVIS
This guy's sitting in a pile of his own shit and piss. If he ain't dead he would have stood up by now.

MILLS
(getting angry)
Listen, Godzilla...

Somerset steps in, heads Mills off.

SOMERSET
Thank you, Officer Davis. We'll see you again after we've had a look.

DAVIS
Yes, sir.

Davis leaves, eyeing Mills. Mills watches him. Somerset hands Mills a flashlight, takes out surgical gloves.

SOMERSET
I wonder what exactly was the point of the conversation you were about to get into?

MILLS
And, I wonder how many times Officer Davis there has found a supposedly dead man who didn't really die until Davis was back in the patrol car calling the morgue and eating a powdered donut.

Somerset snaps one glove on his hand and checks the fit.

SOMERSET
Drop it. We have more important concerns just now, don't we?

MILLS
Fine... for now.

INT. APARTMENT/CRIME SCENE, KITCHEN -- MORNING

The POLICE PHOTOGRAPHER packs up, hoists his camera and equipment bag. Somerset and Mills enter. Mills puts on his own pair of rubber gloves. The grubby kitchen is small; barely room for four people to move around in. The photographer exits:

PHOTOGRAPHER
Bon appetit.

The only light is a murky green illumination from the ceiling.

The light bathes an OBESE MAN who is slumped forward in a kitchen chair, face-down-dead in a plate of spaghetti.

The sizable kitchen table's green tablecloth is covered with soiled paper plates. The plates hold bits of half-eaten sandwiches, potatoes, donuts and other junk-food remnants.

Mills and Somerset turn on their flashlights. Mills points his at the green bulb above. Aluminum foil has been wrapped around the bulb to focus the light on the corpse.

Somerset sweeps the room with his flashlight. He goes to the body and kneels beside it. There's a rope tied around the man's wide gut. Mills comes to stand beside Somerset.

MILLS
I guess that makes it homicide.

Somerset crouches lower, uses a pen to lift one of the dead man's pants cuffs. Rope is tied around the purplish ankle.

Mills examines the knots behind the chair's back. Shines his flashlight on the man's belly.

MILLS (CONT)
Still, he could have tied himself in.
To make it look like murder.

Somerset isn't listening, focused on the corpse. He studies the man's head and neck without touching.

MILLS (CONT)
I don't see any blood or bruises yet.
No wounds. You see anything?

SOMERSET
(irritated)
Not yet.

Somerset stands, points his flashlight: the obese man's stiff hands are clutching utensils. A knife in the left hand, a fork sticking straight up in the right with a hunk of meat hanging skewered. Cockroaches swarm.

Mills turns to the sink and stove. Each burner of the stove has a used pot or pan on it. There's food slopped everywhere.

MILLS
I saw a guy once... committed suicide,
but he wanted to make sure his family
could collect insurance money, right?

Somerset walks to the room's only window. The window has been painted over with black paint. He touches the window with his pinkie finger. The paint is still wet.

Mills goes to a trash can by the refrigerator. The trash can is full to the brim with empty food containers.

MILLS (CONT)
So, this guy took this big knife... and he held it behind him, put the tip of it in his back, and he ran backwards into the wall. Cause, he thought it was going to look like someone stabbed him in the back.

Mills opens the refrigerator. It's nearly empty.

MILLS (CONT)
Except, he poked a big fucking hole in the dry wall when he did it.

SOMERSET
If you could... spare me the anecdotes for now. Leave the refrigerator open for the light.

MILLS
(sarcastic)
Oh, forgive me. I thought we had this male-bonding thing going. My mistake.

Somerset looks at the floor, deep in thought. His flashlight beam follows a trail of dripped sauces, soups and bits of food running from the stove to the table.

SOMERSET
What do you smell? Other than him, and all the food.

MILLS
(sniffs)
I don't know... there's something.

Somerset goes close to the table, then leans to peer under.

SOMERSET
A bucket.

Somerset points the flashlight and Mills crouches, pulls up the tablecloth on his side of the table. Two large dead rats lay on the floor beside a metal bucket.

Mills grimaces, slides under the table, careful to avoid the rats. He looks in the bucket. He leans back, baffled.

MILLS
It's vomit.

He looks at Somerset under the table.

MILLS (CONT)
It's a bucket of vomit.

SOMERSET
Is there any blood in it?

MILLS
Can't tell by looking.

Somerset stands, perplexed, stares at the dead man. There is a knock at the door. The detectives look to DOCTOR THOMAS O'NEILL, 52, the medical examiner. O'Neill is a frumpy man, seems a bit gone, looking at the green bulb.

O'NEILL
Mood lighting. Very sixties.

He drops his bag on the floor, sorts through the contents.

MILLS
(to Somerset)
You think he was poisoned?

Mills goes to the trash can, pokes the garbage with a pencil.

MILLS (CONT)
And, those rats there somehow ate the poison off the floor?

SOMERSET
Guessing this early is useless.

O,NEILL
You girls have got the forensics guys out there chompin' at the bit. Don't know if we'll all fit in here though.

Mills continues searching the garbage.

MILLS
There's room. Light's the problem.

SOMERSET
Well, three is certainly a crowd in here. And, with four, someone's bound to be stepping on evidence.
(pause)
Detective Mills, go help the officers question the neighbors.

MILLS
(not pleased)
Thanks, but no thanks. I'll stay on this.

Somerset watches O'Neill at the corpse. O'Neill points a thin flashlight with his mouth, his hands free for the examination.

SOMERSET
(not looking up)
Send one forensic in on your way out.

Mills is pissed. He lifts his flashlight to shine it on the side of Somerset's face.

A moment passes. Somerset looks at Mills, light shining directly in Somerset's eyes. A longer moment. Mills switches the light off. He leaves.

O'Neill unceremoniously places both hands on the dead man's head, lifts the swollen visage from the spaghetti.

O,NEILL
He is dead.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, BASEMENT GYM -- DAY

THWACK, THWACK ... THWACK. Mills punches the heavy bag with hard, quick punches. Sweat drips off his face. He's in work-out clothing, a bundle of nerves wearing boxing gloves.

The walls are covered in mirrors. Other cops watch Mills as they pass, checking out the new kid. Mills keeps punching, skillfully.

He stops when he sees Somerset reflected in one of the mirrors. Somerset walks over, carrying a pizza box with paper piled on top. He sits on a near bench, takes out a cigarette.

SOMERSET
Pizza and paperwork, Detective Mills.

MILLS
We need to chat.

INT. BASEMENT GYM, BOXING RING -- DAY

Mills opens a door and enters with Somerset behind. They are alone. Chairs face an old, limp-roped boxing ring. Practice pads hang from pegs on a wall. Mills clasps a pair in his gloves, offers them to Somerset.

SOMERSET
No.

MILLS
You just hold them up. I do all the work.

Somerset takes the pads reluctantly, puts them on. He still has the un-lit cigarette hanging from his mouth. Mills climbs into the ring. He holds the ropes open for Somerset, waits.

Somerset doesn't want to do this, but he climbs up.

MILLS
You've seen my files... seen the things I've done?

SOMERSET
Yes. Impressive work.

Mills motions to Somerset and Somerset holds up the practice pads. Mills starts working them, lightly, warming up. THWACK... THWACK...

MILLS
So, what's your problem? I've done my time on door-to-doors, and walking a beat.

SOMERSET
I know it. That doesn't mean...

MILLS
I did all that shit a long time ago.

THWACK... THWACK... Somerset's very stiff, uncomfortable.

SOMERSET
I made a decision, because I have to worry about the integrity of the scene.

MILLS
That's bullshit.

SOMERSET
When I'm on scene, I'm not going to worry whether you think you're getting enough time on the playing field. I'm there to do the work.

Mills punches a little more aggressively. Somerset's backing, flinching, keeping the pads high. THWACK... THWACK... THWACK...

MILLS
The badge in my pocket says "detective," just like yours. I've been Homicide for four and a half years.

SOMERSET
You've worked Homicide for four years, or for five years...

SOMERSET (CONT)
Don't count the half-years, unless you want to sound like a rookie.

Mills unloads a mighty wallop and one practice pad recoils into Somerset's face, knocks Somerset on his ass.

MILLS
Opps. My hand slipped.

Mills walks, climbs out of the ring.

MILLS (CONT)
You fucked me over today, and you know it. You know it.

Somerset looks at the broken cigarette in his mouth. He contains his anger. He seems to realize Mills has a point.

MILLS
Just don't jerk me off. That's all I ask. It's not much. Don't jerk me off.
(pause)
Please, do me the favor of remembering that.

Mill exits. Somerset spits out the broken cigarette.

INT. URBAN SCHOOL, OFFICE -- DAY

Tracy looks out a window from behind steel bars.

Below her, young children play in a playground. They're playing hop-scotch, throwing balls, chasing each other. The swing sets are broken. The handball wall is graffitied.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
I'm sorry, Mrs. Mills. We don't have anything right now.

Tracy looks away from the window to the haggard WOMAN. The school's office is ill-equipped, busy, disorganized.

WOMAN
We'll try to give you a call if we need substitutes next month.

TRACY
Thank you.

Tracy looks back at the playground: on the other side of a chain-link fence, a butcher in a bloody apron walks down the ramp of a freezer truck. He carries a big, whole, slaughtered pig on his shoulder.

The pig's head flops as the butcher walks. Some children stop their games and run to watch the man and the pig corpse pass.

INT. UNDERGROUND SUBWAY TRAIN -- DAY

The train clatters through a tunnel, packed full, WHEELS SCREECHING. The lights go on and off. Passengers read tabloids, stare at their feet, study advertisements on the walls; anything to avoid making eye contact with others.

All races, creeds and colors; all ugly, forlorn human beings. Tracy stands fatigued, holding a handrail.

A bag-lady, crusted with dirt, reeking, pushes her way through the crowd. A man presses against Tracy in an attempt to let the bag-lady pass. Tracy switches hands on the rail, turns sideways to make room. She looks down.

On one seat, a man, quite normal looking, sits holding a pórno magazine, THREE-WAY FUCK, in one hand. His other hand is in his pocket. He's obviously masturbating himself in his pants. No one else notices or seems to care.

Tracy looks away, disgusted. She closes her eyes. The train's wheels SCREECH LOUDER as the train takes a curve.

INT. INDOOR FRUIT STAND -- NIGHT

The front and one side of the shop are entirely open to the busy sidewalk and street. A transparent plastic canopy frames the entrance. A STRANGE MAN, 20, stands at the edge of the canopy. He wears a stained sweatsuit outfit and hums a song, oblivious.

Tracy and Mills look together over the piles of fruits and vegetables piled on wooden stands which form tight aisles.

MILLS
It was okay. I mean... it was certainly better than yesterday. I think Somerset and I came to a small understanding...

Mills holds his thumb and forefinger about a quarter of an inch apart to illustrate.

MILLS (CONT)
... about this big.

TRACY
He sounds interesting.

MILLS
He is that, if nothing else.

Mills throws some oranges in the basket hanging from Tracy's arm. He goes to check out the carrots. Tracy looks up from heads of lettuce to the strange man at the entrance.

The strange man hums on, rocking back and forth slowly, his eyes glassy. Customers come and go, paying him no mind.

Mills notices Tracy's interest. He keeps comparing carrots.

MILLS
We started a big homicide case today. I'll spare you the grisly details.

The strange man suddenly stops humming and looks into the store with a crooked grin.

STRANGE MAN
Name that tune? Anybody name that tune? Name that tune...

The man keeps repeating this, over and over, still ignored.

TRACY
It's... it's like they emptied all the insane asylums into the streets.

She looks back to the heads of lettuce.

TRACY (CONT)
That's what it's like. Like they just gave up, and let everyone out.

Mills nods, his back to Tracy.

TRACY (CONT)
There are a lot of frightening people in this city.

MILLS
There are a lot of frightening people in the world.

Tracy looks again to the strange man.

STRANGE MAN
Name that tune? Anybody name that tune?

TRACY
It seems worse than Philadelphia, because everything is pushed right up against you. In your face.

Mills edges past Tracy towards the front of the store, tries to be pleasant.

MILLS
Listen, honey. I don't want to fight tonight. Okay? Can we just go one night without fighting about something?

He looks over apples, thinks that's the end of that.

TRACY
I'm not trying to start a fight.
(pause)
How am I trying to start a fight?

MILLS
We're here now. Okay. Are we supposed to pack it all in and go back? How are we going to do that?

TRACY
Do I have to act like I love this place? Is that what a "good wife" would do?

MILLS
(doleful)
There's a lot of pressure on me... I...

TRACY
And, there's a lot of pressure on me. I'm here with you.

MILLS
I know. I know...

Mills steps towards the open air entrance. He's watching something. The strange man is still heard offscreen.

Tracy reaches to a high wooden shelf, trying to reach a bag of rice, her back to Mills.

TRACY
I'm not going to close my eyes and block everything out, David. I'm not going to act like you delivered us to some sort of paradise. I can't...

She gets the rice and turns. Mills is not there. She sighs, angry, looks around. She walks towards the entrance and sees him --

TRACY'S P.O.V. -- THE STREET

In front of the stand, Mills has run to the corner of the sidewalk to help a very old woman with a cane. The elderly woman smiles up at Mills, takes his arm as he helps her off the curb and across the street. He talks to her as they go.

INT. INDOOR FRUIT STAND -- NIGHT

Tracy's anger fades. She shakes her head, touched, amazed by the plain boy scoutishness of her husband.

TRACY'S P.O.V. -- THE STREET

Mills deposits the old woman on the other side. She thanks him, patting him on the cheek. Mills starts back towards the fruit stand, proud of himself. A car screeches to a halt, just missing him. The driver leans out the window, yelling at Mills. Mills kicks the side of the car.

MILLS
Fuck you.
(as car leaves)
Fuck you, you son of a bitch! I'm walking here.

INT. INDOOR FRUIT STAND -- NIGHT

Tracy rolls her eyes in amused disappointment. She sighs again.

Mills passes the babbling strange man, comes up to Tracy.

MILLS
I'm sorry... I couldn't pass it up. I never had a chance to actually do that. But, we can start the argument right back up where we left off, right?

Tracy looks at him, charmed, no longer willing to fight.

MILLS
(playing dumb)
What?

Tracy wraps an arm around Mills and kisses him. He holds her.

STRANGE MAN
That was the theme from tv's Mod Squad. I'm surprised nobody got that one.

The strange man starts humming a new tune. An old man tries to get through the aisle where Mills and Tracy are kissing.

OLD MAN
(infuriated)
Excuse me. Excuse me!

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

A small transistor RADIO PLAYS on the bedside table.

Mills and Tracy are in bed, making love under the sheets. They move rhythmically, kissing, sweating hard.

Mills holds Tracy's hair in his hands, pulls her head back as she gasps and he thrusts his entire body against hers.

Mills' hair is soaked. He is anything but mellow as a lover, quickening while Tracy twists underneath him. Tracy holds tight to the back of his neck with one hand.

Finally, Mills pushes himself up on his arms, holding his head down against Tracy's chest. Holds for a long moment, till he is spent and lowers himself against her, into her arms. He rests a long time. She kisses his forehead, keeping her eyes closed.

Finally, Mills rolls off her, gets behind her and wraps the both of them in the sheets. He folds himself against her, and they stay that way.

TRACY
Goodnight.

MILLS
Goodnight.

After a long moment, Mills shifts back, sits up. Tracy looks over her shoulder at him as he takes a towel off a chair and stands. Mills wraps the towel around his waist.

He leans over to give Tracy a last kiss. She watches him leave the room. She is about to say something, but does not. A light comes on in the other room, leaking through the door.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Mills sits down at his desk. He starts looking through police paperwork. The RADIO in the other room goes OFF in mid-song.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

TUESDAY

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM -- EARLY MORNING

The room is cold, clean. Stainless steel. White tile. Many pathologists work at slabs. Mills and Somerset are with DOCTOR SANTIAGO, 35, who stands over the mostly dissected obese corpse.

SANTIAGO
If you take a look here, buddies...
I can tell you, it was not a poison.
If you can see...
(more)

SANTIAGO (CONT)
I have emptied all of everything out of the stomach. But, look at it, now that I took away the liver.

Santiago reaches into the belly of the cavernous corpse. Mills moves closer beside Somerset, but not too close, trying to hide his disgust. We hear squashy sounds as Santiago works, but we don't see in.

SANTIAGO
I move the lungs over. First, see how big this fat son-of-a-bitch stomach is. Now... here is the strange thing, on the stomach. Stretches.
(pointing)
And, here it is distended. Look at the size of that, because of the foods.

MILLS
I can see what you're pointing at...

SANTIAGO
On the stomach. The lines of distention.

Somerset's looking in, not believing what he sees.

SOMERSET
Doctor, are you saying this man... ate till he burst?

SANTIAGO
Yes, well, he didn't actually burst. He was bleeding, inside of himself. And, there's a hematoma on the outside... on the belly.

Somerset walks around the slab, looking the body over.

MILLS
He died by eating?

SANTIAGO
Someone punched him, or kicked him.

Somerset notices something on the partially shaved head.

He leans close to look at five or six small bruises on the back of the dead man's head; circular bruises, some darker than others, all about the same diameter as a dime.

SANTIAGO (CONT)
Oh, and there is this here... something else you have to look at and see.

Somerset stands straight, realizes something about the bruises.

SANTIAGO (CONT)
Most of the stomach contents are in the lab now... but, this. I found these in the fat man's stomach.

Santiago looks amongst tools, buckets and jars of liquid. He picks up a glass jar and shows it to Mills. In the jar: many little bits of blue plastic. Like scrapings.

MILLS
Plastic?

Mills gets Somerset's attention, hands him the jar. Somerset looks at it a long time.

SANTIAGO
Why these are in a fat man's stomach, I don't know.

INT. APARTMENT/CRIME SCENE, HALLWAY -- MORNING

Outside the door to the murder scene, Mills and Somerset cut through the RESTRICTED AREA/CRIME SCENE seal.

SOMERSET
Those bruises on the back of the victim's head were caused by the muzzle of a gun.

MILLS
So, the killer had him at gunpoint, and gave him a choice: eat, or get you head blown off.

INT. APARTMENT/CRIME SCENE, KITCHEN -- MORNING

Somerset and Mills enter. Somerset takes out the jar of plastic scrapings, turns on the now normal light. They begin to search.

SOMERSET
He was force-fed... till his body started rejecting the food. He literally couldn't eat another bite.

MILLS
So, the killer held a bucket under him.

SOMERSET
His throat was swollen from the effort. He was bleeding internally.
(more)

SOMERSET (CONT)
He must have blacked out... and, if you're the killer, you're not going to want to wait around for him to die.

Somerset examines the counter tops and wall. Mills gets down on his knees, examines the linoleum floor.

MILLS
You kick him, pop him like a fucking balloon.
(touches floor)
Somerset, look here.

Somerset gets down, holds the jar against the linoleum.

SOMERSET
Same color and texture.

They both crawl on hands and knees, study every inch of floor.

MILLS
If this is what that is... it doesn't make sense. It doesn't figure.

SOMERSET
Always look for one thing to focus on. There's always one singular thing, and it might be as small as a speck of dust, but find it and focus... till it's an exhausted possibility.

MILLS
How are pieces of the floor going to get in the guy's stomach?

SOMERSET
Exactly. Why would so many piece be inside his stomach unless they were placed there intentionally?

Somerset notices deep scratches in the linoleum, fingers the grooves. He takes a piece of plastic from the jar, holds it to the scratches, fiddles with it, fits it in. He looks up to see, these scratches are in front of the refrigerator. It looks like they were caused by the refrigerator having been pulled away from the wall and pushed back at some time.

INT. APARTMENT/CRIME SCENE, KITCHEN -- LATER MORNING

We are BEHIND THE REFRIGERATOR as it is rocked back and forth. It's pulled away from the wall. Somerset and Mills strain, pull a few more feet, then release. They lean to look --

The refrigerator had hidden a space on the wall where the dust has been cleared. In that space: a circle, smeared in grease, and a note taped in the center of the circle.

Somerset's BEEPER starts BEEPING. Mills leans to read:

MILLS
"Dear Detectives. Long is the way, and hard, that out of hell leads up to the light."
(looks at Somerset)
This is not good.

SOMERSET
Milton.

MILLS
What?

SOMERSET
It's a quote from a book. Milton's Paradise Lost.

Somerset takes out his beeper, looks at the LED window. He looks up at Mills, like they've received very bad news.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENTS, HALLWAY -- MORNING

A marble hallway. A DETECTIVE, 50, nervously chewing his nails, quickly leads Mills and Somerset past cops and forensics.

DETECTIVE
I said to myself, I'm not going to screw around with this. Nope. Fuck that. It's still pretty fresh meat. I called the medical examiner... he's coming.
(stops at door)
When I got to it, I knew. As soon as I laid eyes on it, I knew...

The detective opens the door. FOLLOW Somerset and Mills --

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT/CRIME SCENE, LIVING ROOM -- MORNING

Gross, deep yellow light comes through the only window with its blinds up. The light anoints a NUDE MAN displayed, dead.

DETECTIVE (O.S.)
...this is your guy who did this.

The nude dead man's legs are folded under him as if he were kneeling, and he's bent forward, chin on the floor. His eyes are open, his arms outstretched before him. Mills and Somerset walk to either side of the man.

The detective closes the door, bites his thumb nail. The apartment is on a high floor, so it's quiet.

Somerset sees the window has been covered with a sheet of yellow gel, stapled in place to produce the colored light.

Mills examines the corpse. There's a chair one foot behind the nude man. It's an elegant leather chair, drenched in blood. There's a carving knife on the carpet in the middle of a huge stain of blood under the chair. Mills looks at pieces of cut rope on the floor behind the chair. The rope is knotted.

Somerset crouches beside the body. There's a big piece of flesh missing from the man's left side, as if the love-handle had been lopped off. Hundreds of pennies lie scattered under and around the man. The man's hands are palms up, fingers wrapped around more pennies.

Mills walks over to examine a scale on the floor between the corpse and the doorway. It's an old-fashioned counter-balance scale with two suspended dishes on a see-saw arm. In the high dish: the hunk of flesh missing from the man's side. In the low dish: a one pound counterweight.

MILLS
(to Somerset)
A pound of flesh.

Somerset stands and walks backwards to view the entire scene from near the door.

He looks worried, vaguely frightened. He turns his head, looks to a far wall. Beside a big, abstract, constructivist painting, there's a note pinned up inside a triangular smear of blood.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, CAPTAIN'S OFFICE -- EARLY EVENING

An office full of pictures, books and mugsheets, yet it is meticulously well kept. The CAPTAIN, 50, sits at his tidy desk. He's dressed conservatively. Mills and Somerset sit before him. Somerset reads from a photocopy of the note they just found.

SOMERSET
(reading)
"One pound of flesh, no more no less. No cartilage, no bone, but only flesh. This task done, and he would go free."

The captain is a calm man, but whenever not speaking, without fail, he clenches his jaw repeatedly, causing the muscles in his neck and jaw to pulse.

Somerset stands, paces.

SOMERSET (CONT)
This victim, Mr. Gold, was tied down nude, holding a carving knife. And he was given a long time... to decide. Where to make the first cut? There's a gun to your head... but, what part or parts of your body are expendable?

Mills sits back in his chair, arms crossed, seems anxious, doesn't know why they're here.

SOMERSET (CONT)
Mr. Gold tried for the whole pound at once, his love handle. But, he went into shock. Bled to death.

CAPTAIN
What is the point, Somerset?

SOMERSET
Look at both killings together. This murderer is an artist.

CAPTAIN
An artist?

SOMERSET
He uses colors and symbols. He positions the bodies after death, so he's working with composition. It's been premeditated so meticulously... and this is just the beginning.

CAPTAIN
Wrong. For all we know, we might never hear from him again, and I don't want that kind of talk floating around.

Somerset shakes his head "no."

SOMERSET
The rats and the pennies. The circle and the triangle on the wall. There's something about them... these murders mean something.

CAPTAIN
So? What?

Somerset has no answer. The captain is irked, jaw clenching.

CAPTAIN
(to Mills)
You with him, or you just here to watch?

MILLS
This is his stuff, captain. I've been out in the cold most of the day.

CAPTAIN
(to Somerset)
Always working overtime up in that big brain of yours, huh? Always cooking.

SOMERSET
I need you to know ... I want us reassigned. We're declining this case.

MILLS
(sits up, angry)
What?!

CAPTAIN
What the hell are you talking about?

SOMERSET
This cannot be my last duty here. It's going to on and on.

CAPTAIN
You've left unfinished business before.

SOMERSET
Everything else was taken as close to a conclusion as humanly possible.

MILLS
Can I just say something?

SOMERSET
Also... I don't think this should be Mills' first case.

MILLS
This is not my first case, fuckhead!

CAPTAIN
I don't have anyone else to give this to, Somerset. And nobody's going to swap with you.

MILLS
Give it to me, then. There's nothing that says I have to fly with him.

The captain considers this.

MILLS
If Somerset wants out, fuck him.

SOMERSET
It would be too much for him, too soon.

MILLS
(to captain)
Could we talk about this in private?

The captain looks at Somerset, then at Mills.

CAPTAIN
That's not necessary. You're in.

MILLS
Thank you, sir.

CAPTAIN
Start picking up the pieces. I'll shuffle some paper and try to get you a new partner.

Mills stands. Somerset will not look him in the eye. Mills leaves, slams the door. Somerset seems deflated.

CAPTAIN
You win, Somerset. You're out.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

WEDNESDAY

EXT. CITY STREET -- MORNING

A vendor lays out a pile of tabloid newspapers at his busy newsstand. The headline: SECOND BIZARRE MURDER!, in huge print.

The vendor lays out another tabloid pile. Headline: "GIVE ME MY POUND OF FLESH," SAYS BLOODTHIRSTY KILLER, in big, red letters. The vendor places a third pile beside the others: SICKENING MURDERS - EXCLUSIVE DETAILS INSIDE!!!

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- MORNING

Old office. Moving boxes on the floor. The single window faces a billboard. Somerset works on a manual typewriter. He types hunt-and-peck, slowly. His paperwork is on the desk in two sloppy piles. A jarring SOUND is HEARD OFFSCREEN, like fingers on a blackboard. Somerset looks up, irritated.

A WORKMAN is working at the open door, holding the source of the sound, a razor blade he's using to scrape the words DETECTIVE SOMERSET off the door's window.

WORKMAN
Sorry.

Somerset turns back to typing. The captain steps in, looks at the workman, then drops more papers on Somerset's desk.

As always, the neatly groomed captain clenches his jaw. He looks around. Two of boxes on the floor have DETECTIVE MILLS written across them. The captain picks one up, puts it on top of the other. He sits, watching Somerset, starts straightening the forms on the desk.

CAPTAIN
What are you going to do with yourself out there, Somerset?

SOMERSET
I'll get a job. Maybe on a farm. I'll fix up my house.

CAPTAIN
Can't you feel it yet?
(pause)
Can't you feel that feeling... that you won't be special anymore?

SOMERSET
(lying)
I don't know what you mean.

CAPTAIN
You know.

Somerset reclines, looks at the captain.

SOMERSET
Did you read in the paper today, about the man who took his dog for a walk? And how he was mugged? And, his wallet was taken, and his watch. Then, while he was still lying unconscious, his attacker stabbed him with a knife in both eyes. It happened last night. Not far from here.

CAPTAIN
I heard.

SOMERSET
I have no understanding of this place.

CAPTAIN
It's always been like this.

Somerset saddles up to the typewriter. Hunt-and-peck.

SOMERSET
Yes. You're absolutely right.

The captain lays the paperwork down in two neat stacks.

CAPTAIN
You were made for this work, Somerset. I can't believe you're going to trade it all in for a tool belt and a fishing rod. But, I guess I'm wrong.

The captain leaves. Somerset looks up now that the captain's gone. He grabs the paper piles and ruffles them back to their disheveled state. He looks at the workman.

The workman is looking at Somerset, has a rag in his hand to remove the last remnants of Somerset's name.

SOMERSET
(angrily)
Put a little elbow grease into it!

The workman is startled, continues his work.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT/CRIME SCENE, LIVING ROOM -- DAY

The grandly furnished apartment where the second murder took place has been dusted for prints and searched.

Two female forensics are at work.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT/CRIME SCENE, MASTER BEDROOM -- DAY

Mills is seated in front of a long writing desk with many drawers. All the drawers are open. Mills looks through letters and stationary. Nothing of use. He tosses the pile back.

He sits back, frustrated, yanks off one rubber glove, looks around the room. Books have been taken off their shelves, the bed has been stripped. The room has been given the once over.

The victim's family photographs hang in expensive frames on one wall. There are at least thirty photos of varying sizes: ancestors, sons and daughters, grandchildren and friends. An over-weight forensic, CHRIS, 32, leans in through the doorway.

Mills looks up and Chris shakes his head glumly.

MILLS
He must have left us another puzzle to solve... somewhere.

CHRIS
We'll keep looking, but we're running out of possibilities.

Chris leaves and Mills stands to stretch. Something catches Mills' eye. He walks over to the door, curious. At the base of the open door, there's a ball of paper wedged under to act as a doorjamb. Mills puts his glove back on, pulls the ball out.

He uncrumples the paper as the door slowly swings shut. The page has a drawing on it, of the sun with waves of heat at its edges. There is a single eye in the center of the sun.

An arrow is drawn in dried blood on the back of the closing door. Mills notices this and pushes the door closed.

The blood arrow points to the side and up, seems to be pointing to the photo gallery wall. Mills goes to examine the photos.

His eyes search each photo... one by one... till he sees it:

MILLS
Christ...

A framed photo of a falsely pretty, middle-aged woman smiling and wearing pearls. Under the glass, on the photo itself, circles have been drawn in blood around the woman's eyes.

EXT. CITY STREETS, DOWNTOWN -- NIGHT

An assault on the senses. Crowded streets and sidewalks. On every corner, in every doorway, on every stairwell -- freaks, junkies, punks, leather boys and motorcycle girls. A few tourists wander in the mix, heedful of the dangers around them. Buildings border narrowly.

Somerset walks against the stream. He carries a file.

CAR HORNS HOWL. MUSIC BLASTS from the entrances of clubs. REGGAE from one club is soon OVERTAKEN by RAP from a second story window. TECHNO-POP blasts from the tattoo parlor.

Somerset does not like this place, views it with disdain. He walks to avoid two men fighting on the ground. The men are pulling hair and pounding each other idiotically.

Somerset takes a cigarette from a full pack, lights it as he crosses through the traffic jam in the street. A VAGRANT steps up with his hand out.

VAGRANT
Spare me a cigarette, money-grip? Spare me a cigarette?

SOMERSET
Sorry. Last one.

He walks on. We BEGIN to HEAR JAZZ MUSIC.

INT. JAZZ CLUB -- NIGHT

A club at capacity. The JAZZ MUSIC CONTINUES like a slow, cool breeze from a JAZZ TRIO on a platform.

The air is thick with smoke. Yuppies sit elbow to elbow with the last members of the beat generation. Everyone's drinking beer, smoking pot.

Somerset crosses the club, looking for someone. He takes a tissue from his pocket, rips pieces off and jams the pieces in his ears. At the back of the club, a major-league bouncer stands in front of a closed door. Somerset shows his badge and the bouncer steps aside with reservation.

INT. NARROW STAIRWELL -- NIGHT

The walls are black. Somerset opens the door, enters, walks down the long flight of stairs. As Somerset descends, the JAZZ MUSIC FADES and is ENGULFED by the sound of SPEED METAL. DEAFENING.

At the bottom, Somerset opens another door. He enters --

INT. UNDERGROUND ART GALLERY -- NIGHT

A narrow room. SPEED METAL is even LOUDER. This is a private art party. The people are lizard-like, pale. Men and women priding themselves on their gauntness.

Somerset passes canvases on the walls. Pointlessly abstract paintings. Splatters, smears and blobs of color.

Party-people stand in front of these "works," engrossed. Somerset slides past, not interested in the art, jamming the tissue further in his ears. He spots his objective.

WILLIAM McCRAKEN, 42, stands inside a circle of admirers. He is dressed like a pauper, his baggy clothing stained with many colors of paint. He wears dark sunglasses, bored by the bleached-blonde girl whispering in his ear.

Somerset worms his way to stand in front of William. The party-goers turn their attention to this intrusion.

William looks up, pushes the girl away. He takes off his sunglasses. His eyes are badly bloodshot and listless.

He looks Somerset over ... and then grins, glad to see him.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Mills stands brooding over a photocopy of the picture of the woman with her eyes circled in blood. He looks overworked, drinks coffee. His desk is swamped with files.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
I have voiced the same concerns to our law enforcement officials, and they assure me he is of the highest caliber.

Mills looks to a t.v. on a table, picks up a remote, increases the volume. On the screen, MARTIN TALBOT, 47, source of the voice, stands before reporters. He's a powerful presence, with a gold tooth in the front of his mouth.

A REPORTER (V.O.)
(from t.v.)
As District Attorney, don't you feel some responsibility? Detective David Mills lacks the experience...

TALBOT (V.O.)
(from t.v.)
I've always said... I've always said, don't send a boy to do a man's job.

Mills is hanging on every word.

TALBOT (V.O.,CONT)
But, David Mills has a sterling record with the Philadelphia force. I stand behind him one hundred percent.

MILLS
(relieved)
You tell 'em boss. Detective David Mills is wonderful human being...

TALBOT (V.O.)
However... however... let me say this...

Mills looks back at the television.

TALBOT (V.O.,CONT)
If Detective Mills, at any point in this investigation... if he is not pulling his weight, I will be the first in line to pull his plug.

Mills points the remote, turns the t.v. off as reporters crowd Talbot. Mills stares at the blank screen, dispirited.

Across the room, Tracy stands in the doorway. Mills does not see her. He looks at the photocopy and sits at his desk.

Tracy watches him, great concern in her sad eyes.

INT. WILLIAM'S STUDIO/APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Somerset walks through this vast artist's studio, a converted warehouse space filled with canvases. It's clear the works at the underground art gallery were William's. William climbs a ladder to a loft storage space. He moves cautiously, like he's not quite up to the task.

WILLIAM
I always figured that's the only reason you and I used to be friends. Because I was a friend of hers.

William yanks a painting wrapped in dusty paper, climbs down.

WILLIAM (CONT)
Speaking of which...

William hands the painting to Somerset, walks to a director's chair facing a paint-splashed canvas on an easel. He is a used-up man, bound in an apathy-induced haze. He sits, picks up a squeeze bottle of orange paint from a table of supplies.

WILLIAM (CONT)
I painted that about five years ago. I always told myself I'd give it to you next time I saw you.

Somerset starts unwrapping the painting.

William "paints," using the squeeze bottles and by flicking saturated brushes so that the paint flies against the canvas. Most times, he's not even looking at the canvas or colors he's using. He looks over his shoulder at Somerset.

WILLIAM (CONT)
Things are different these days, pal. You wouldn't believe it...

Somerset looks at the unwrapped painting and is hit by a swell of memories. Horribly sad memories. It's a portrait in oils of a pretty, red-headed woman.

William shoots red paint with one hand, concentrates on lighting a filterless cigarette with the other.

WILLIAM (CONT)
People buy my paintings now... they drive down in their BMWs and Rolls Royces. It's the new money generation.
(more)

WILLIAM (CONT)
I guess they think they're touching the avant-garde...

William looks at his creation, then calmly kicks the easel over.

WILLIAM (CONT)
There's another thousand dollar William McCracken expression of anarchy.

William gets up, walks across the wet canvas, leaving footprints. He looks down at what he's done.

WILLIAM (CONT)
Make that two thousand.

He laughs. Somerset holds up the delicately rendered portrait.

SOMERSET
How is she? Have you seen her recently?

WILLIAM
Huh... oh. No. She moved out of the city. Last winter. She married some businessman, or something like that.

Somerset fights the anguish this causes, puts the painting down.

SOMERSET
Good for her.
(pause)
I'm leaving soon myself. I'm finally getting out.

WILLIAM
Yeah? What happened to the idealistic super-cop I used to know?

SOMERSET
He became a realist.

William grunts, flicks his cigarette away, takes out a bag of pills. He palms a few, notices the judgment in Somerset's eyes.

WILLIAM
Oh... sorry.

William turns his back to Somerset, pops the pills. Out of sight, out of mind. Somerset is disappointed, disgusted.

SOMERSET
(sarcastic)
Not that I don't appreciate your recent artistic endeavors... but, what happened to the painter I used to know?

William smiles like a dolt, laughs a little.

WILLIAM
I can't remember.

INT. WILLIAM'S STUDIO/APARTMENT -- LATER NIGHT

Color photos of the first and second murder sit on a drawing table. The top photos are like establishing shots, each taking in the entire display the murderer created.

William examines with Somerset looking over his shoulder.

WILLIAM
Man... can I buy these from you?

SOMERSET (CONT)
They're not for sale.

Somerset lays out photos of the notes, triangle and circle:

SOMERSET (CONT)
What is it? What's the murderer trying to say?

William narrows his eyes. Does not know.

SOMERSET (CONT)
What picture is he painting?

WILLIAM
(figuring)
Wait a minute...

William has an idea. He ambles over to a row of cabinets where oversized art books are stacked. He hunts through a pile, shoves some books aside.

WILLIAM
I... I've seen things like that...

SOMERSET
Where?

William keeps digging, finds one book, finds another. He opens one as he walks back to the drawing table.

WILLIAM
It's church stuff. Christianity.

William lays a book down, finds a page. He opens it to Somerset. There is a circle to the side of the text. It says GLUTTONY under the circle.

Somerset creases his brow, turns the page. William opens another book.

WILLIAM (CONT)
When it first started... Christian artwork was all from Bible stories. It was like... nobody had any imagination. It was all... standardized.

William pages through and we catch glimpses of the bizarre, worlds of Hieronymus Bosch. Horrifying religious visions.

WILLIAM (O.S.,CONT)
But, later, everyone started painting to tell their own stories... to teach lessons. Guys like Bosch, Bregel the elder... Van Eycks.

William shoves the open book to Somerset. Somerset looks:

Seven paintings in a circular pattern showing characters giving in to sins. Wicked, grotesque people.

Somerset turns the book to examine each painting right side up.

SOMERSET (O.S.)
The seven deadly sins.

WILLIAM (O.S.)
That's what these murders remind me of. Paintings like these.
(points)
Gluttony... greed...

SOMERSET (O.S.)
Envy, wrath, pride, lust and sloth. Seven deadly sins.

WILLIAM
Amen, brother.

William goes to continue pulling other books.

WILLIAM (CONT)
I can find more examples. There's lots of paintings like those... painted over hundreds of years.
(moves books)
And you're right... that murderer is an artist.

Somerset is chilled by all this, immersed in the Bosch book.

SOMERSET
And, it's two down... five to go.

EXT. CITY STREET, PORNO DISTRICT -- NIGHT

A bright, tawdry intersection. Neon swirls and circuit-bulbs on porno theatres provide the flash. Cars, taxies, and barkers urging sexual indulgence from doorways provide the noise.

The streets and sidewalks are crowded with lonely humans, mostly men, looking around, sizing up promises made on porno placards: FUN WITH NUDES, BIG BOOBS, NAKED DESIRE, etc. The usual contingent of abnormal cretins wanders in the crowd, looking for someone to hurt.

MOVE through the crowds. Meet JOHN, a balding, middle-aged man, wearing thick glasses. There is not a single thing strange or unusual about his appearance. FOLLOW him as he walks. He's nervous, looking at the porno palaces.

His sweaty hand clutches a Bible tight against his chest. He doesn't feel comfortable being here.

John walks to a corner, waits for the light so he may cross. A grotesque STREET PREACHER approaches waving his own Bible. People walk away from him, so he confronts John.

PREACHER
...are you, Sir? Is Jesus Christ your Lord and Master? Do you believe in Him?

John tries to ignore, traffic blocking his escape.

PREACHER (CONT)
(pleading)
Don't ignore me. Listen to what I have to say. Christ can be your savior!

JOHN
(quiet anger)
Leave me alone.

PREACHER
Think about God, sir. I can help you let Him into you life.

Finally the light changes. John turns and spits in the preacher's face. The preacher recoils as John crosses quickly.

John hurries between cars in the crosswalk. The preacher curses from the corner, his voice drowned out by traffic.

EXT. ANOTHER CITY STREET, PORNO DISTRICT -- NIGHT

People pass on the sidewalk. John is amongst them, but he stops, looking up at something offscreen.

He's looking at a bright red storefront adorned with red neon: THE HOT HOUSE. Massage parlor. The Hot House's BARKER notices John's interest.

BARKER
Interesting isn't it, friend? You like that, you like girls, then come on in.

John doesn't hear the barker. Steps up to study fading pictures of naked women massaging happy men. Nudity.

BARKER (CONT)
You'll see a lot more inside. You'll see a lot more than that.

John's just looking, his face bathed in bright red light, the neon reflected in his thick glasses.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Somerset, holding more than an armful of art books and novels, pounds on the apartment door. Tracy opens it with the chain on.

TRACY
Can I help you?

She takes a second to drink Somerset in. Somerset is surprised, having expected Mills. Tracy is so exquisite that he falters.

SOMERSET
Uh... I was looking for Mills. David, I mean.

TRACY
He's not here right now.

Somerset tries not to drop any books while he digs up his badge.

SOMERSET
Mrs. Mills, my name is Somerset. If I could leave these books for him.

TRACY
(undoes chain)
Please, come in.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM/KITCHENETTE -- NIGHT

Tracy leads Somerset into the disarray of the apartment.

TRACY
David went for a walk. To clear his head. Oh, you can put those here.

SOMERSET
Thank you.

Tracy motions and Somerset puts the books on Mills' desk. He starts looking through one book, checking paperclipped pages.

SOMERSET (CONT)
Could you tell him... tell him this is his reading assignment. It's urgent. I've marked the most important pages.

TRACY
Would you like some coffee, or a drink. David should be back any minute.

SOMERSET
I do have to get going.

Somerset sees a medal encased in glass on the desk amongst pens and pencils. He picks it up: it's a medal for valor from the Philadelphia Police Department.

TRACY
At least I got to meet you. David has told me a lot about you.

SOMERSET
Really? Good things, I hope.

TRACY
Oh, yes. He said you were very smart.

SOMERSET
Really?

TRACY
I think he's a bit intimidated by you.

Somerset thinks about this, finds it hard to believe. He goes through his pocket, pulls out a notepad and some paper scraps.

SOMERSET
I'm going to leave him a list of specifics. It all relates to the case he's on.

He lays the various scraps and receipts aside on the desk, sits to start writing on the notepad. Tracy goes to the kitchenette to get a chair.

TRACY
You two aren't working together anymore. Isn't that so?

SOMERSET
To be perfectly honest, Mrs. Mills...

TRACY
Tracy.

SOMERSET
Tracy. David and I weren't exactly what you could call fast friends.

TRACY
That's too bad.

Tracy brings the chair over by the desk and sits. Somerset looks up from his writing.

SOMERSET
I doubt your husband shares that opinion.

Tracy nods, leaning forward, semi-conspiratorially.

TRACY
You know, Somerset, David is very... determined. I'm sure you've seen, it's not likely he'll ever be compared to Gandhi.

SOMERSET
He's a good cop. He just...

TRACY
He sees policework as a crusade. That's what he wants it to be, and, that might sound naive, but he's made a conscious choice to be naive.
(pause)
Believe me, his heart's in the right place.

Somerset pauses, enchanted by her.

SOMERSET
I hear you and he were high school sweethearts.

TRACY
Yeah. Pretty hokey, huh? But, what girl wouldn't want the captain of the football team as their lifelong mate?

SOMERSET
It's rare these days... that kind of commitment.

TRACY
I guess so.

Tracy's smile falters a bit. Somerset notices this. He breaks from her spell, turns to continue writing.

SOMERSET
Well... this will only take a minute.

TRACY
Take your time.

Somerset writes. Tracy looks over the stack of books:

Titles on the spines: BOSCH, A HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN ART, BREGEL THE ELDER, etc. Hardcover novels: DANTE'S PURGATORY and THE CANTERBURY TALES.

Tracy stands to look at the novels on top, then sees the pile of paper scraps from Somerset's pocket. She picks up the piece of wallpaper with the pale red rose at its center.

TRACY
What is this?

Somerset looks up. Sees her holding the paper rose. He takes it, slightly self-conscious, looks at it.

SOMERSET
My future.

Tracy tilts her head, looking at Somerset.

TRACY
You have a strange way about you, Somerset... I mean in a good way... unusual.

Somerset doesn't know what to say. He pockets the paper rose.

TRACY (CONT)
I apologize. I'll get out of your hair.

Tracy stands, takes the chair back to the kitchenette.

TRACY (CONT)
It's just... it's nice to hear a man who talks like that. If David saw that paper, he'd say you're acting like a homosexual. That's how he is.

SOMERSET
(mock indignation)
Well! I guess won't be showing this to him then.

TRACY
I suppose not.

Somerset continues writing. Tracy sits at the kitchenette table, watches him.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

THURSDAY

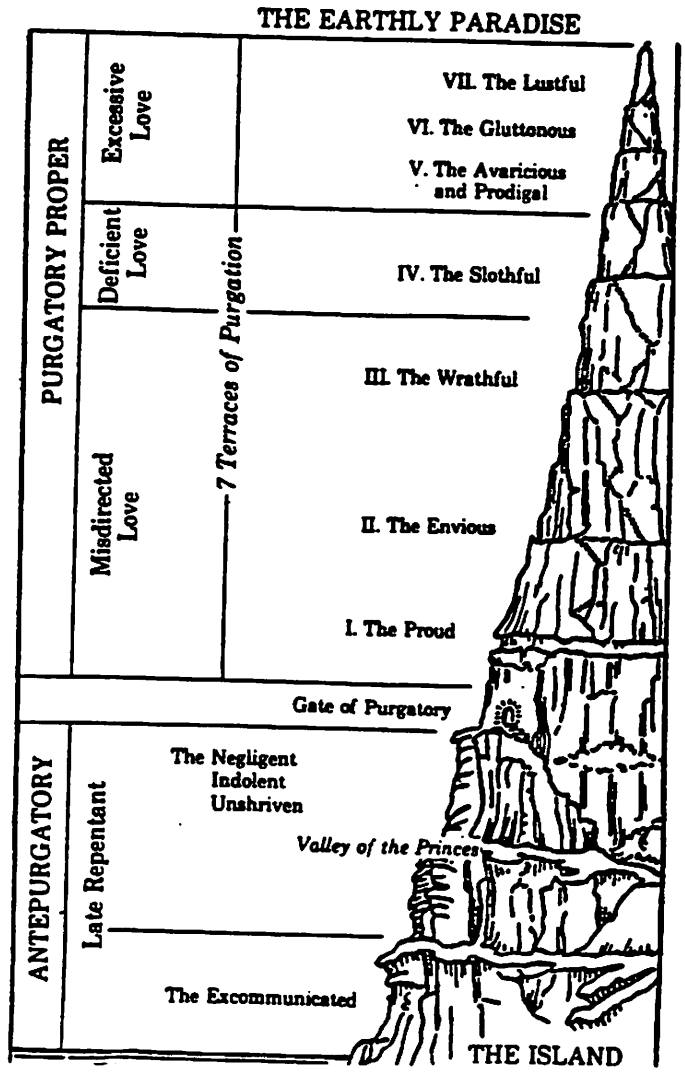
EXT. CITY MORGUE -- MORNING

It's raining hard. Mills exits the morgue building with a few art books and a paper cup of coffee. He holds one art book over his head as he dashes through deep puddles in the street.

INT. MILLS' CAR -- MORNING

Mills gets in, puts his coffee on the dash and tosses the art books in a box. He closes the door. Alone with the sound of the rain. He wipes water off his face, looks at his tired eyes in the rearview mirror.

He reaches in the box of books, takes out copies of The Canterbury Tales and Dante's Purgatory. He makes a face, opens Dante's Purgatory:



Mills turns to a bookmark, rests the book on the steering wheel. He reads. He bites his lip, leaning close to the words. He concentrates, mouths some of the words to himself. He finally closes the book, shaking his head, not understanding anything he's reading. He starts pounding the book against the steering wheel with all his might.

MILLS
Fucking Dante. Goddamn, poetry writing freak, mother-fuck...

A figure outside the window knocks on the glass. Mills rolls it down. A COP in raincoat hands a wet paper bag through.

MILLS (CONT)
Good work, Officer. Good work.

The cop leaves as Mills quickly rolls the window up and rips the bag open. Inside: Cliff Notes for Dante's Purgatory and The Canterbury Tales.

MILLS (CONT)
Thank God.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- DAY

It still rains outside. Somerset enters, stops to notice DETECTIVE MILLS painted on the door where his name used to be. He walks, sees all his belongings have been moved from his desk and piled on a small temporary desk in the corner.

Somerset sits at the temporary desk, starts organizing the files and papers. Mills enters carrying the box of books.

SOMERSET
How's it coming?

MILLS
Great.

Mills puts the box on the large desk. They both settle in, attending to their work. Two men, about five feet apart, each trying not to acknowledge the other's presence.

Mills takes out his Cliff Notes, looks to see Somerset is occupied, hides them in a desk drawer.

Somerset finishes one form, flips it and looks up. There's a chalk board nailed to the wall.

On the chalkboard:

1 ~~gluttony~~	5 wrath
2 ~~greed~~	6 pride
3 sloth	7 lust
4 envy	

The PHONE RINGS. Both men look at it. Phone RINGS again.

SOMERSET
It's your name on the door.

Mills picks up. Somerset returns to his work.

MILLS
(into phone)
Detective Mills here.
(lowers voice)
Honey, I asked you not to call unless...
(listens)
What... why? Okay... okay. Hold on.

Mills is confused. He holds the phone out to Somerset.

MILLS
It's my wife.

Somerset looks quizzical. Mills shrugs. Somerset takes it.

SOMERSET
(into phone)
Hello?
(listens)
Yes, well... I appreciate the thought, but... I...
(listens)
Well, I guess I'd be delighted to. Thank you... goodbye.

Somerset gets up, hangs up, puzzled. Mills is waiting.

MILLS
Well?

SOMERSET
I'm invited to have a late supper with you and your wife. And I accept.

MILLS
How's that?

SOMERSET
(sits back down)
Tonight.

Mills looks at the phone, lost.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM/ KITCHENETTE -- NIGHT

A record player on a moving box PLAYS QUIET MUSIC.

There's a basketball game with NO VOLUME on the t.v. screen. Tracy, Mills and Somerset eat at the kitchen table. Mills has a beeper by his beer and occasionally fingers it absently.

TRACY
Why aren't you married, Somerset?

MILLS
Tracy. What the hell?

Somerset adjusts his napkin on his lap, thinking.

SOMERSET
I was close. It just didn't happen.

TRACY
It surprises me you're not married. It really does.

SOMERSET
Any person who spends a significant amount of time with me finds me... disagreeable. Just ask your husband.

MILLS
No argument.

Mills grins, but he means it. He sips beer. The conversation lapses into long silence. Somerset concentrates on his plate. Tracy looks at Mills, who eats while watching the basketball game.

TRACY
(to Somerset)
How long have you lived here?

SOMERSET
Too long. Much too long.
(drinks)
What do you think of our fair city?

TRACY
You take the bad with the good, I suppose. It's... it's...

MILLS
It takes time to settle in.

Tracy looks at Mills. Somerset can see it is a sore subject.

SOMERSET
(to Tracy)
You'll get used to it pretty quickly. There are things in any big city that stand out at first. But...

A LOW RUMBLING is HEARD as plates begin to rattle and clatter.

TRACY
Subway train. It's right below us.

The dishes clatter more. Coffee cups clink against their saucers. Tracy holds her cup to stop it, tries to act like it is nothing, but she is clearly bothered.

MILLS
It'll go away in a minute.

They wait. The t.v. picture goes fuzzy. The RUMBLING grows LOUDER, knocks something over in the sink. Mills continues eating. Somerset fiddles with his food. The record player skips, then plays on. The RUMBLING finally DIES DOWN, till everything is normal.

MILLS
(uncomfortable)
This real estate guy... a real scum, brought us to see this place a few times. And, it was nice enough, and the price was right. I was thinking it was nothing, but I started to notice, he kept hurrying us along. I mean what could it be? Why would only show it like five minutes at a time, before he'd hustle us out the door?

Mills laughs, lamely.

TRACY
We found out the first night.

Somerset tries to stay straight, but he can't help laughing.

SOMERSET
I'm sorry... it's a nice apartment.

He pulls himself together, but only for a moment. He can't stop it, laughs harder, covering his mouth. Tracy and Mills laugh.

MILLS
(sighs)
Oh, fuck.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM/KITCHENETTE -- LATER NIGHT

The record player spins a different album, DIFFERENT MUSIC. Tracy's clearing the last dishes into the sink. Mills and Somerset are drinking beer.

SOMERSET
All television does is teach children that it's really cool to be stupid and eat candy bars all day long.

TRACY
I don't think I've ever met anyone who didn't have a television.

Tracy takes a pot of coffee to the table and pours.

MILLS
That's weird. It's un-American.

Somerset shrugs.

MILLS (CONT)
What about sports?

SOMERSET
What about them?

Tracy brings over a plate of cookies and puts it on the table.

MILLS
You go to the movies at least.

SOMERSET
I read. Remember reading? What's the last book you read, Mills?

MILLS
T.V. Guide.

Mills laughs. Burps. He turns to Tracy.

MILLS (CONT)
Excuse me.
(to Somerset)
I just have to say, I can't respect any man who's never seen Green Acres.

Somerset gives a blank stare. Tracy walks away.

MILLS (CONT)
You've never seen The Odd Couple? The Flintstones?

SOMERSET
I vaguely recall Wilma, and someone named... Dino.

Across the room, Tracy turns the t.v. and the record player off. She goes into the bedroom, shuts the door behind her without a word. Somerset and Mills turn to the closed door.

They look at each other, then sit for a time. Somerset drinks coffee. Mills drums his fingers on his beeper. Big silence.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT BUILDING, STAIRWELL -- NIGHT

Mills walks up the creaky stairs. He carries his briefcase, a six-pack and art books. Somerset follows, reading a case file.

MILLS
We think he acted like he was delivering a package. The doorman at Mr. Gold's building says he doesn't even look at anyone who goes in anymore.

Mills opens a door to the roof --

EXT. MILLS' APARTMENT BUILDING, ROOFTOP -- NIGHT

Mills and Somerset walk onto the roof. It is a spectacular view on all sides. Miles of city lights. Breathtaking. SOUNDS of the CITY reach them.

SOMERSET
No connection between the two victims?

Mills shakes his head, unloads what he's holding onto a rusty table. He sits in one of two lawn chairs. Somerset sits across from him.

SOMERSET (CONT)
No witnesses of any kind?

MILLS
None. Which I can't understand. It's like this guy's invisible.

SOMERSET
In this city, minding your own business is a perfected science.

Somerset takes a picture from the file, the drawing of the sun with an eye at its center. He opens a book, CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS, which is full of illustrations. He starts paging through.

SOMERSET (CONT)
At the precinct, Sunday nights, they offer a public crime prevention course. And, the very first thing they teach is that you should never scream "help" if you're in trouble. Scream "fire." Because people don't want to get caught up in anything. But, a fire... that's entertainment. They come running.

Somerset holds the books up to Mills, points to a picture of the sun and eye, same as the drawing Mills found.

SOMERSET (CONT)
"The Sun in Splendor with the Eye." It refers to God the father, and to Saint Thomas Aquinas.

MILLS
Which saint is he?

SOMERSET
Aquinas wrote a summary of theology, Summa Theologica. And he wrote about the seven deadly sins.

Mills takes the book and looks it over.

SOMERSET (CONT)
Now, what else have you got?

MILLS
Look, I appreciate being able to talk this out, but... it's my case.

SOMERSET
So... satisfying my curiosity. I'm still leaving town on Sunday.

Mills is pondering, very tired. He unlatches his briefcase, takes a photocopy of the photo of the falsely pretty woman and hands it to Somerset.

MILLS
The eyes were circled. With Mr. Gold's blood.

SOMERSET
This is his wife?

MILLS
(nods)
She was away on business. She got back the day he was killed. If this means she saw anything, I don't know what. We've questioned her about ten times.

SOMERSET
And, if it's a threat?

MILLS
We put her in a safe house.

SOMERSET
This is the one thing.

MILLS
I know.

EXT. SLUM TENEMENTS -- NIGHT

Two twenty-story tenement buildings stand practically underneath the span of a bridge. The streets are littered with garbage. Teenagers stand in cliques in front of a liquor store. Cars pass slowly, CAR STEREOS PUMPING out HIP HOP.

Under the bridge, in shadow, a car is parked between two dumpsters. The truck is open.

AT THE BACK OF THE CAR

The trunk is full of cardboard boxes which are in turn full of tall, orange candles. Hundreds of candles. JOHN leans in under the trunk's bulb, opens a leather pouch and checks the contents:

A plastic bottle of prescription pills. A bottle of aspirin. A hypodermic needle filled with liquid. Lastly, many jars of baby food: STRAINED CARROTS, STRAINED SPINACH, CREAMED CORN, etc.

INT. SLUM TENEMENT BUILDING, STAIRWELL -- NIGHT

John climbs the stairs holding the leather case and a closed shoebox. He wears clip-on sunglasses, a hat pulled low, a thin overcoat on his plump body.

INT. SLUM TENEMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY -- NIGHT

John comes from the stairwell door, looks, walks up the hall. The walls are graffitied. The soiled floor is wet in spots. ARGUMENTS and LOUD CHILDREN are HEARD from behind closed doors. John comes to apartment 303. He's winded from the climb. He takes out keys, lets himself in. Closes the door.

EXT. MILLS' APARTMENT BUILDING, ROOFTOP -- NIGHT

Somerset stands at the edge, holding the photo of Mrs. Gold. He puffs on a cigarette, looks out at the city lights.

SOMERSET
It's like he's preaching.
(pause)
The sins were used in medieval sermons. There were seven cardinal virtues, and then seven deadly sins, as a learning tool. The sins distract man from true worship. True faith.

Mills is seated at the table with art books open.

A breeze fans the pages of the books. The flipping pages reveal views of heaven, hell, adoration, crucifixion and sin.

MILLS
Like in these paintings, and in Dante's Purgatory, right? But, in Purgatory, Dante and his buddy climb that big mountain...

SOMERSET
Seven Terraces of Purgation.

MILLS
Anyway... pride comes first, not gluttony. And in the all the paintings, the sins are in a different order. I can't find a pattern.

SOMERSET
Because there's creativity in the mix. Consider these books as the murderer's inspiration. Or aspiration.

Somerset drops his cigarette to the empty street, watching the glowing tip fall. He looks at the woman's circled eyes.

SOMERSET
He sees himself contributing to the body of Christian work.

MILLS
He's punishing these people.

SOMERSET
For all of us to see and learn from. These murders are like forced attrition.

MILLS
What? Forced what?

SOMERSET
Attrition. When you regret your sins, but not because you love God.

MILLS
Because a guy's holding a gun on you.

Somerset thinks. He walks from the edge to Mills.

SOMERSET
When Mr. Gold's wife found the body, about how long was she in the apartment?

MILLS
She didn't find it. The door to the apartment was open and a neighbor...

SOMERSET
I thought you said she found the body. When she got back from a business trip.

MILLS
No. She got back after you and I had already been there.

Somerset thinks, coming up with something.

MILLS (CONT)
What?

Somerset holds up the photo of Mrs. Gold.

SOMERSET
Maybe she is supposed to see something... she just hasn't had a chance to see it yet.

INT. SAFE HOUSE -- NIGHT

The room is like a bland hotel room. Mills stands beside MRS GOLD. He shows her photos from the murder scene. Mrs. Gold is crying. Somerset stands across the room.

Sections of the photos are covered to hide the husband's corpse.

MILLS
Please, look for anything strange or out of place. Anything at all.

MRS GOLD
I... I don't understand. Why now?

Mills helps her go through the photos. He is shaken himself, not wanting to put her through this.

MILLS
I need your help if we're going to get the guy who killed your husband. If there's anything in these pictures...

Mrs. Gold sobs quietly, wipes her tears.

MRS GOLD
I don't see anything.

MILLS
Are you absolutely sure?

MRS GOLD
I can't do this now... please.

Mills looks at Somerset. Somerset holds other photos.

MILLS
We have to show her those. There might be something she's missing.

Somerset looks at the photos in his hand, hesitant. These photos show Mr. Gold's corpse, not covered in any way.

SOMERSET
Have her look at those one last time.

MRS GOLD
Wait. Here... here's something...

MILLS
What is it?

Mrs. Gold points at the constructivist painting on the wall in one photo. The painting is an abstraction of colored squares.

MRS GOLD
This painting... in the living room...

MILLS
What?

MRS GOLD
Why is it is hanging upside-down?

Mills jerks his head to look at Somerset. Big score.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT/CRIME SCENE, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

This is where the greed murder took place. Somerset and Mills are taking the constructivist painting off the wall. Nothing on the wall behind the painting. Blank space.

MILLS
Nothing.

SOMERSET
This has got to be it.

Somerset puts the painting down, resting it on its bottom edge. The frame is backed by a thick sheet of brown paper. He points to where the wire used to be screwed into the frame, and to where it has been re-screwed.

SOMERSET (CONT)
It has to be. He changed the wire to rehang it.

Somerset tears along the edge of the brown paper to get to the space between it and the canvas. He tears out the entire sheet. Mills helps pull it away, but there's nothing there. Empty. Mills looks at both sides of the paper, then tosses it away.

MILLS
It's nothing.

Somerset lays the painting down, face up. He pokes his finger on the painted surface. Mills watches as Somerset kneels, takes out a credit card and presses it's edge against the canvas, trying to peel up some of the paint.

MILLS (CONT)
Give it up. The killer didn't paint the fucking thing.

Somerset pushes the painting away, stands, frustrated.

MILLS (CONT)
He fucked us.

Somerset backs away from the wall, staring at the space where the painting hung. There is only a nail. He stares intently, then turns and walks out of the room.

Mills holds his hands to his temples, furious. SOMERSET can be heard from the other room, going through drawers, dropping things. GLASS is HEARD BREAKING. Mills grabs a lamp and throws it on the floor.

MILLS (CONT)
Son of a bitch!

Somerset comes back in, holding something. He steps over the lamp and goes to the blank wall space.

MILLS (CONT)
What?

SOMERSET
Bear with me.

Mills watches. Somerset has a woman's make-up compact in hand. He opens it, uses the soft brush to begin applying the red rouge powder to the wall around the nail.

MILLS
(incredulous)
Oh, yeah, sure. You got to be kidding.

SOMERSET
Shut up and wait!

Somerset brushes with wider strokes. He blows, leans very close to the wall to study the powder. Leans closer still. Pause.

SOMERSET (CONT)
Call the print lab. Now.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Tracy is asleep with lights on. She stirs, opens her eyes.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Tracy opens the door, enters. It's quiet. She sees Mills and Somerset are gone. She's all alone. Unhappy.

EXT. MILLS' APARTMENT, FIRE ESCAPE -- NIGHT

Through the window, we can see into the bedroom. Tracy comes back from the living room. She goes to her side of the bed, kneels. She reaches between the mattress and bedspring, takes out a paperback book she has hidden there.

She comes to the window, opens it and climbs out onto the fire escape. She sits, dangles her feet through the metal bars. She opens the book and tries to read by the street light, resting her head against the railing. A WOMAN is HEARD SCREAMING distantly.

Tracy looks down the empty street, unsettled. The woman is not heard again.

Tracy lays back, looks at the sky, holding herself. We can now see the title of the book: PREPARING FOR PARENTHOOD. There is a picture of a baby on the cover.

Tracy cries, quietly.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT/CRIME SCENE, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

A MALE FORENSIC uses a magnifying glass to study a very clear fingerprint in black powder on the wall.

FORENSIC
Oh, boy...

MILLS (O.S.)
Talk to me.

The forensic bites his lip, still studying.

Mills and Somerset watch the forensic who works offscreen.

MILLS (CONT)
(to Somerset)
Listen, honestly... have you ever seen anything like this? Been involved in anything remotely like this?

SOMERSET
No. I have not.

FORENSIC (O.S.)
Well, I can tell you this, detectives...

The forensic steps down from a stool. Behind him, where the painting once was, there are fingerprints, clear and distinct. The prints have been left side by side, to form letters which form the words: HELP ME.

FORENSIC (CONT)
...just by studying the underloop... these are <u>not</u> the victim's prints.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, PRINT LAB -- NIGHT

Dark. A TECHNICIAN sits before an old computer. The computer's green screen shows fingerprints being aligned, compared and then rejected; whir - click - whir - click - whir - click. Mills and Somerset watch, bathed in the green glow.

SOMERSET
It doesn't work for me. I can't believe he wants us to help him stop.

MILLS
Who the hell knows? There's plenty of schizoids out there doing dirty deeds they don't want to do. With tiny voices whispering nasty things in their ears.

Somerset doesn't buy it. The technician adjusts a knob.

TECHNICIAN
I've seen this baby take three days to finish a cycle, so you guys can go cross your fingers somewhere else.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Somerset and Mills come from the print lab. A janitor is mopping the hall. The computer is HEARD WHIRRING and CLICKING onwards. Somerset sits with a groan on a couch outside the door. Mills flops beside him.

SOMERSET
You really meant what you said to Mrs. Gold. You really believe we'll get him, don't you?

MILLS
And you don't?

SOMERSET
I wish I still thought like you. I'm so far gone from that.

MILLS
So, tell me what you think we're doing.

SOMERSET
All we do is pick up the pieces. We take all the evidence... all the pictures, statements. Write everything down and note what time things happened. We take it all, make a nice, neat pile and file it away. Just in case it's ever needed in a courtroom.

MILLS
You're unbelievable. In my entire life, you're the oldest man I've ever met.

SOMERSET
I've seen even the most promising clues lead to dead ends. Hundreds of times.

MILLS
I've seen the same. I'm not the country hick-boy you seem to think I am.

Somerset takes out a cigarette and lights it.

SOMERSET
In this city, if all the skeletons came out of all the closets... if every un-revenged corpse were to suddenly rise and walk again, there would be no more room for the living.

Mills slumps back, crosses his arms, closes his eyes to sleep.

MILLS
Don't try to tell me you didn't get that rush tonight... that adrenalin. Like we were getting somewhere.
(pause)
And, don't try to tell me it was because you thought we found something that would play well in a courtroom.

Somerset looks at Mills, puffs the cigarette. The computer is heard: whir - click - whir - click...

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

FRIDAY

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, HALLWAY -- EARLY MORNING

Our detectives are fast asleep on the couch, leaning against each other. People pass and look at them strangely.

The captain steps up, slaps their faces simultaneously.

CAPTAIN
Wake up, Glimmer Twins. We have a winner.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, READY ROOM -- EARLY MORNING

A windowless classroom. The captain stands in front with a white screen at his side. The face of a black man, 25, ZERO, is projected on the screen from a slide projector.

CAPTAIN
His street name is Zero, as some of you know. His prints were found at the scene by Detectives Mills and Somerset.

FIVE hardened POLICE OFFICERS, four men, one woman, sit in chairs facing the captain. They all wear bullet-proof vests with "POLICE" stencil-painted across them. Somerset and Mills sit in back, drinking coffee, still trying to wake up.

CAPTAIN (CONT)
Now, Zero has a long, long history of mental illness. Serious illness. He was all over your television sets two years ago after he raped and killed a seventy-three year old woman. He got off, as the saying goes, on a technicality. So we watched him on the streets, and he went out of circulation about a year ago.

FEMALE COP
If he disappeared, what do you want from us?

CAPTAIN
His last place of residence is still in his name. A search warrant is being pushed through the court as we speak.

A red-headed cop, CALIFORNIA, 28, raises his meaty hand.

CALIFORNIA
So, have the housing cops walk up and ring the doorbell. Problem solved.

The cops laugh. The captain clenches his jaw.

CAPTAIN
Listen, California. When you go in, if Zero isn't home, some of his buddies might be house-sitting. And besides using, Zero deals, so, you will be very uninvited guests.

There is chatter among the cops. Somerset leans to Mills while the captain continues the briefing.

SOMERSET
Does not seem like our killer, does it?

MILLS
You tell me. I'm new in town.

SOMERSET
Zero does possess the requisite degree of insanity... but, he doesn't have the desire somehow. Our killer seems to have more purpose. More purpose than Zero could ever conceive of.

MILLS
We'll tag along.

Somerset wants no part of that.

SOMERSET
Why would we?

MILLS
Satisfy our curiosity?

INT. MILLS CAR -- MORNING

Mills drives, follows a police van. Somerset rides shotgun. Mills is pumped, ready. Somerset takes one Rolaids tablet off a fresh roll and chews it.

MILLS
You ever take one?

Somerset pulls out his gun, checks the load.

SOMERSET
No. Never in twenty-four years. I took my gun out only five times with the actual intention of using it. I never fired it. Not once.

MILLS
I pulled it once, fired it once. I never took a bullet.

SOMERSET
And?

Mills turns a corner, tires screeching.

MILLS
It was my first one of these. We were a secondary unit, in vice. I was pretty shaky going in. When we busted the door, looking for a junkie, the fucking guy opened fire. One cop was hit in the arm. He went flying... like in slow motion.
(pause)
I remember riding in the ambulance. His arm was like... a piece of meat. I thought, it's just his arm. But, he bled to death right there anyway.

A pause. Somerset opens his window, feels the air on his face.

SOMERSET
How did the fire-fight end?

MILLS
Well, I was doing really good in Philly up till then. Lots of simple busts. I've always had this weird luck... but, this was wild.
(pause)
I got that fuck with one shot... right between the eyes. And the next week, the mayor's pinning a medal on me. Picture in the paper, whole nine yards.

SOMERSET
How was it?

MILLS
I expected it to be bad, because I heard about other guys. You know... I took a human life. But, I slept like a baby that night.

Somerset eats another antacid.

SOMERSET
I think Hemingway wrote somewhere... I can't remember where, but he wrote that, in order to live in a city, you have to have the ability to kill. I think he meant you truly must be able to do it, not just faking it, to survive.

MILLS
Sounds like he knew what he was talking about.

INT. SLUM TENEMENT BUILDING, STAIRWELL -- MORNING

Crack viles and hypodermic needles crunch under heavy boots.

The five cops from the briefing, fully geared up, rifles and handguns held, move quickly up the stairs, single-file. Somerset and Mills follow, guns out. Somerset is sweating bullets. Mills is juiced.

INT. SLUM TENEMENT HALLWAY -- MORNING

The cops enter the dank hallway, the same hall we saw John in before. They move cautiously, stepping over a drunken, helpless man. A door opens and a woman peeks out. The female cop points her gun and the woman obeys, slamming the door.

California leads, steps up to apartment 303. He has a search warrant scotch-taped to the front of his bullet-proof vest.

CALIFORNIA
(to black cop)
This is it. Give it up.

A black cop hoists a battering ram. The other cops get on both sides of the door. Mills moves front. Somerset hangs back.

CALIFORNIA (CONT)
Police!! Open the door!

The black cop brings the ram forward with a splintering thud. The door flies open. The cops storm in.

INT. SLUM APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- MORNING

The cops charge down a short hall into this incredibly dusty room. A bed sits against a far wall. Mills and California move up to the bed. Someone lies under an indigo blanket. Three other cops move, training their weapons on the bed.

CALIFORNIA
Good morning, Sweetheart!

A blond cop goes into another room. Mills kicks the bed.

MILLS
Get up now, motherfucker! Now!

INT, SLUM APARTMENT, ADJOINING ROOM -- MORNING

The blond cop enters, gun trained, looks around in confusion.

The room's tables, chairs and floor are covered with hundreds of colorful, plastic air fresheners.

INT. SLUM APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- MORNING

Somerset moves in, looks around. He notices the area around the bed, the ceiling, walls and floor, has been painted indigo, while the rest of the room is its original white. On a wall, a white sheet is pinned up with a square drawn on it in excrement.

MILLS
I said get up, Sleepyhead!

Mills pulls the indigo blanket off the bed, reveals the shriveled, sore-covered form of a black man who is blindfolded and tied to the bed with a thin wire wrapped time and time again around the bed. Tubes lead from the stained loincloth around the man's waist and snake under the bed. The victim is partially covered by what seem to be piles of black spaghetti.

CALIFORNIA
Oh, fuck me!

Somerset pushes past the cops who recoil from the stench.

MILLS
Holy shit.

SOMERSET
Sloth... it's sloth.

The black cop touches the black spaghetti. Holds a piece.

BLACK COP
What the hell... those are dead worms.

CALIFORNIA
(to Somerset)
Check this out, dick.

California points with his gun to the end of the black man's right arm. The hand is gone, severed at the wrist long ago.

MILLS
It's him. It's Zero.

SOMERSET
Someone call an ambulance.

CALIFORNIA
Someone call a hearse, more like.

The female cop has gone to the wall where the sheet is pinned up. She pulls the sheet aside and finds: fifty-two polaroid pictures; all pictures of Zero tied to the bed, with a date written at the bottom of each. It is a visual history of Zero's physical decay. The blond cop enters from the other room.

BLOND COP
What the fuck is going on?

MILLS
Hey, California. Get your people out.

Somerset takes out rubber gloves and puts them on.

CALIFORNIA
You heard him. Hit the hall, and don't touch anything.

The other cops file out as Mills goes to examine the polaroids under the sheet. Somerset replaces the sheet over Zero's body. California stays by his side.

CALIFORNIA (CONT)
It looks like he's some kind of friggin' wax sculpture.

Somerset places his finger along Zero's throat.

MILLS
Somerset, you... you better look here.

Mills studies the polaroids. Somerset walks to join him.

MILLS (CONT)
All pictures of Zero tied to the bed.
(crouches)
The last one's dated three days ago.

Somerset looks at the first photo. In it, Zero is bound and gagged, but he is fit, healthy.

SOMERSET
(awed)
The first picture... it's dated one year ago. Almost to the day.

California lifts Zero's blanket to peek under, examining with morbid curiosity.

CALIFORNIA
Mo-ther...

Mills kneels and lifts the bottom of the sheet off the floor, finds an open shoebox. On the box: TO THE DETECTIVES.

MILLS
What's this?

California leans close to Zero's gaunt, blindfolded face.

CALIFORNIA
You got what you deserved, Zero.

Somerset leans down beside Mills. Mills looks through the shoebox. Inside are plastic, zip-lock bags. One bag contains small clumps of hair, one contains a yellow liquid...

MILLS
A urine sample... hair sample... fingernail clippings. He's laughing at us.

California is still close to Zero's face when suddenly Zero's lips twist. Zero lets out a loud, guttural bark. California jerks back in fear, shouting, falling over a chair.

Mills and Somerset reel, standing. They see California on the ground, scared out of his mind, pointing.

CALIFORNIA
He's alive!

Mills and Somerset look towards the bed.

Zero's lips move feebly as he lets out a sick, gurgling moan.

CALIFORNIA
He's still alive!

EXT. SLUM APARTMENT BUILDING -- MORNING

A crowd has gathered. Mills' car, the police van and two ambulances are parked on the sidewalk.

INT. SLUM HALLWAY -- MORNING

The siege cops are in the hall, holding neighbors at bay.

INT. SLUM APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- MORNING

Three ambulance attendants are at the bed, working on Zero. One attendant uses wire-cutters to clip Zero's bonds.

INT. SLUM TENEMENT BUILDING, STAIRWELL -- MORNING

Mills and Somerset stand in the middle of one flight of stairs. They are both highly agitated.

SOMERSET
The way this has gone, I didn't think it was possible, but we may have underestimated this guy. The type of intestinal fortitude it must take... to keep a man bound for a full year. To sever his hand and use it to plant fingerprints.

MILLS
I want him bad. I don't just want to catch him anymore. I want to hurt him.

SOMERSET
Listen... we have to divorce ourselves from out emotions here. We have to keep focusing on the small details.

MILLS
I don't know about you, Somerset, but I feed off my emotions.

SOMERSET
He'll string us along all the way if we're not careful.

Mills is looking at the floor, burning with anger. Somerset grabs him by the jacket.

SOMERSET (CONT)
Are you listening to me?!

Mills pushes Somerset's hand off.

MILLS
I hear you.

There is a sudden brilliant flash of light and the SOUND of a CAMERA ADVANCING. Mills and Somerset look --

Down the stairs, John is posing as a reporter. He has his camera and flash up, pointed at the detectives.

JOHN
Say cheese.

He takes another picture, flashbulb flashing. Mills charges downwards, grabs John by his wrinkled clothing.

MILLS
What the fuck are you doing?

John squirms, holds up a laminated PRESS identification pass.

JOHN
I have a right, Officer. I...

Mills shoves him and John stumbles a few steps, then falls to the landing below with a thud. His glasses fly off.

MILLS
That doesn't mean anything. This is a closed crime scene now!

Somerset steps down and pulls Mills back. John stands.

JOHN
You can't do this! You can't...

MILLS
Get the fuck out of here!

John gets his glasses, scrambles downstairs, out of sight.

JOHN (O.S.)
The public has a right to know!

Somerset yanks Mills harder, till Mills sits on the stairs.

MILLS
How do those cockroaches get here so quick?

SOMERSET
They pay cops for the inside scoop, and they pay well. You can hate them, but you better give them something, or they'll just make it all up.

MILLS
(calming)
I'm sorry... I just...

SOMERSET
Oh, it's alright. It's always impressive to see a man feeding off his emotions.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Mills stands with the blase DR. BEARDSLEY, who reviews a medical chart on a clipboard. Zero lies inside an oxygen tent with tubes running into him. The room is dark.

BEARDSLEY
A year of immobility seems about right, judging by the deterioration of the muscles and spinal cord. Blood tests show a whole smorgasbord of drugs in his system. Heroin... crack... even an antibiotic which was administered to keep the bed sores from infecting.

Mills looks into the oxygen tent.

MILLS
He hasn't said anything, or tried to express himself in any way?

BEARDSLEY
Even if his brain were not mush, which it is... he chewed his own tongue off a long time ago.

Mills winces, moves away from the bed.

MILLS
There's no way he'll survive?

BEARDSLEY
Detective, he'd die right now of shock if you were to shine a flashlight in his eyes.

EXT. CITY STREET, CATHOLIC CHURCH -- AFTERNOON

A tall church on a bustling street. Smoggy air has eaten at the stonework. The homeless are camped out on the stairs.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH, PRIEST'S QUARTERS -- AFTERNOON

The priest's accommodations are quite spacious and comfortable. The parish's wealth is evident. FATHER BLEEKER, 38, stands looking at several 8" by 10" glossies. He's dressed in his "civilian" clothing, wears his hair short and proper. These photos are making him heartsick.

Bleeker hands them to Somerset who is seated by a fireplace.

BLEEKER
Put them away. I wish you hadn't brought them into the church.

SOMERSET
I needed for you to see them.

Father Bleeker shakes his head, as if he were trying to forget the images. Somerset replaces the murder photos in a file.

BLEEKER
There were five principal phases in the development of early Christian art. From Hellenistic through the Renaissance... each period was affected by the decrees of religious leaders.

SOMERSET
If this killer belongs to a certain branch of the church... if he collects religious art from a certain period, I want to know. I have to narrow it down.

Bleeker walks to an ornate, gold cabinet. He puts on a pair of cotton gloves.

BLEEKER
The influences on these... things he's done, couldn't have come before the Gothic period. What's in those pictures is presented far too asymmetrically.

Bleeker crosses himself before using a key to open the cabinet. He takes out an ancient devotional book and a piece of cloth.

BLEEKER (CONT)
The colors will tell the tale.

Bleeker takes the book to a table. Somerset follows. Bleeker lays the cloth under the book, opens the book, tenderly.

BLEEKER (CONT)
Each sin had a symbolic color. But the specific color designations changed throughout the ages.

Somerset leans to examine Bleeker's illuminated manuscript:

Two pages of prayer. The prose is elaborately formed, surrounded by colorful illustrations of the seven deadly sins. Bleeker's finger points to a rendering of a man seated on a rock, guzzling from a jug. It's been painted in orange.

BLEEKER (O.S.)
This is an example. Gluttony is the sin, and the color is orange. This particular manuscript is preserved from the 18th century.

SOMERSET (O.S.)
In the murders, gluttony is green. Greed is yellow. Sloth is indigo.

Bleeker steps away and Somerset gets closer to the pages.

BLEEKER
So, if this murderer is as precise as you say, than you need to find out at what period in history was gluttony green... and so on.

SOMERSET
Where do I look? If the colors changed so often?

BLEEKER
(contemplates)
There is one man... Father Stone.
(pause)
I haven't heard from him for quite some time. This was his passion. He spent his life studying the sins... and preaching against them.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- AFTERNOON

The chalkboard on the wall:

1 ~~gluttony~~	5 wrath
2 ~~greed~~	6 pride
3 ~~sloth~~	7 lust
4 envy	

Mills is behind his paperwork covered desk, listening to a uniformed OFFICER who looks over a report sheet.

OFFICER
Zero's landlord said an envelope of cash was in the office mailbox each month. He says, quote, "I never heard a single complaint from this guy and nobody ever complained about him. He's the best tenant I ever had."

MILLS
There's a landlord's dream tenant. A paralyzed man with no tongue.

OFFICER
Who pays the rent on time.

MILLS
Bring me everything as soon as it's transcribed.

The officer leaves. Mills starts sorting through piles on his desk. He doesn't know where to begin.

He sits back in his chair, looks at the collage-like collection of pictures pinned on the walls: photos and diagrams of the murder scenes, the drawing of the sun and eye, color pages and black and white copies of pages from art books.

He stares, thinking. He stands, takes a photocopy off the wall. The killer's first note:

Dear Detectives,
Long is the way, and hard, that out
of hell leads up to the light.

MILLS
(to himself)
Milton.

INT. CENTRAL LIBRARY -- AFTERNOON

Big brass lamps hang from the high ceiling. Mahogany chairs and tables run down the center floor which is bordered by three levels of balconies. People wander like ants in an ant farm.

Mills walks, taking it all in. He goes to the circulation desk. Impatient patrons wait in a long line. He watches the bored HEAD LIBRARIAN, female, 64, help an old man at the desk.

She opens the old man's books, runs a laser pen over a bar code sticker, pushes a few buttons on a computer.

INT. CENTRAL LIBRARY, TOP BALCONY -- LATER AFTERNOON

Near the balcony railing, overlooking the main floor, Mills sits before a computer card catalog. He reads the computer screen, unsure. He sets down his pad and pencil, cracks his knuckles, begins typing on the keyboard. The computer gives off a quiet BEEP. Pleased, Mills reads the screen. Types.

On the screen: TITLE / PARADISE LOST_

He hits return. Reads the screen as information on the book appears. He copies it on his pad, puts the pencil in his mouth.

He types. On the screen: SUBJECT / JACK THE RIPPER_

Hits return. Again, he copies info from the screen.

INT. INNER CITY CLOISTER -- AFTERNOON

A monk opens a formidable gateway door, letting Father Bleeker and Somerset into a garden courtyard. Bleeker now wears his priestly garb and collar. The monastery's main building looms at the end of a pathway. The building is stately, ivy-covered.

BLEEKER
Father Stone had a church and congregation of his own. But, he... there were some problems. The church is deserted now.

SOMERSET
Problems?

Bleeker continues walking.

SOMERSET (CONT)
Father?

INT. INNER CITY CLOISTER, HALLWAY -- AFTERNOON

The walls of the hallway are carved with images of saints. Bleeker whispers to Somerset beside a windowless door.

BLEEKER
There was a small orphanage attached to the church, overseen by Father Stone. This was almost thirty years ago.
(hesitant)
He was an excellent priest, devoted in every way. Many in his parish demanded his return.

SOMERSET
Tell me what happened.

Bleeker sees a NUN down the hall, coming towards them.

BLEEKER
Allegations were made... Stone was accused of abusing the children in his care. But, those charges were <u>never</u> substantiated.

SOMERSET
What abuse?

BLEEKER
It was claimed... that the children were beaten. And, punished severely.

The nun is too close for Bleeker to speak freely.

INT. INNER CITY CLOISTER, STONE'S ROOM -- AFTERNOON

The door is unlocked and opened by the nun. Somerset enters and Bleeker waits outside as the nun closes the door. It's dark.

FATHER STONE, 73, is in a wheelchair. Feeble and frail, eyes sunken in their sockets. He looks up at Somerset.

SOMERSET
Father Stone. I'm a policeman. I'd like to ask you a few questions, if it's alright?

The whites of Stone's eyes have yellowed. He seems to nod. Somerset sits on a stool, close.

SOMERSET
I want to ask you about the seven deadly sins.

STONE
The sins.

SOMERSET
Yes, Father.

Stone reaches out a hand to touch Somerset's face. Stone's extremely long fingernails trail against Somerset's cheek and Somerset tries to hide his revulsion.

STONE
Are you one of mine?

SOMERSET
I don't...

STONE
Are you saved? Do you have God?

SOMERSET
I... I need to ask about the sins. Do you understand what I'm saying?

Stone takes his hand away, seems to be getting angry.

STONE
Are you a sinner?

Stone's weak arms wheel him away, towards a corner.

STONE (CONT)
There are sinners here. Even here. And, pain waits for them. Hell is hungry for them.

Stone bites his lip, moaning, disoriented.

STONE (CONT)
They don't realize... they don't know.
(pause)
Fuck them all!

Somerset is shocked by the strength and volume of Stone's jagged voice. The nun goes to place a comforting hand on Stone's shoulder. Stone is beginning to cry.

NUN
(to Somerset)
They shouldn't have let you disturb him. This shouldn't have been allowed.

STONE
Where are the children?
(much louder)
Where are the children?!

INT. CENTRAL LIBRARY, OUTSIDE LIBRARIAN'S OFFICE --AFTERNOON

From a mahogany hallway lined with book-carts, we look THROUGH a big WINDOW into the head librarian's office. The elderly head librarian is at a computer, chain-smoking, working the keyboard. Mills alternates talking on the telephone and reading things off his pad to the librarian.

We cannot hear them, but it's clear Mills is excited as he walks back and forth, hovering over the librarian, looking at her computer screen, making suggestions, then walking to monitor a dot-matrix printer which spews a waterfall of computer paper onto the floor. Back and forth goes Mills, carrying the phone. He closes the pad, puts it in his pocket.

The librarian finishes typing, sits back, done. Mills hangs up the phone, goes to put it on the librarian's desk, but the cord drags, knocks a pile of books off a table.

The librarian is irritated, goes to pick up the books. Mills is apologizing. He goes to watch the printer. He tears the last sheet's perforated edge, gathers the huge pile of printed paper off the floor.

Prize in hand, Mills is so grateful he bends to give the old woman a kiss on the cheek, but she pushes him away, now even more annoyed. Mills goes to leave, knocks over another pile of books. Before he can assist, the angry librarian points to the door. Mills obeys like a scolded child, exits.

The librarian shakes her head in disgust.

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH/ORPHANAGE -- AFTERNOON

A once exemplary church, now boarded up, neglected. Gothic in style, it stands with deserted brownstones and empty lots of rubble as neighbors. Smokestacks spew smoke distantly. Cars and trucks drive by on a nearby elevated highway, but down here on the street it's a ghost town.

There's a building attached to the rear of the church. Somerset's car is parked beside it.

INT. ABANDONED ORPHANAGE, CLASSROOM -- AFTERNOON

The windows are covered over. Somerset and Father Bleeker move through. Somerset has a flashlight with a wide beam. The room is empty except for broken, cob-web covered school desks and a few file cabinets. There are cracked blackboards on the walls. Rats skitter away from the light.

Somerset opens a file cabinet drawer. It's empty. He walks to a door, starts pulling at the rotting boards which seal it shut.

BLEEKER
What are you looking for?

SOMERSET
I'm just looking.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH -- AFTERNOON

Somerset pushes the door. He and Bleeker enter from the classroom into the far back corner of the church. Big church. Shafts of colored light needle through the holes in the pieces of wood and cloth that cover the broken stained glass windows.

Somerset walks down the center aisle between deteriorated pews. Rats run. Pigeons flap about, dirt drifting off their wings.

Somerset shines his flashlight forward to the rather barren altar. To the right, at the top of the altar stairs, there is a stone statue of a saint with his arms outstretched, welcoming.

The life-size saint is covered in spider-webs. Tiny spiders crawl across his eyes, which look down on Somerset.

BLEEKER
Saint Jerome Emiliani. The patron saint of orphans.

Somerset shines the flashlight against the back altar wall, revealing a wooden carving of Christ crucified.

SOMERSET
Is this still the Lord's house?

BLEEKER
Of course it is.

SOMERSET
And, even if Father Stone was guilty of everything... if he was hurting children here? It's still the Lord's house?

Father Bleeker finds this talk insulting and offensive.

BLEEKER
You have no faith, Somerset? Have you given up on the church entirely?

SOMERSET
No.
(pause)
That's not what I've given up on.

Somerset notices two ends of a thick rope suspended from the ceiling above the center of the altar. He looks up, following the rope with the flashlight, when he notices something else. His mouth drops. Bleeker looks, and is equally horrified.

Above them, in the beam of light: seven large paintings on panels tilted forward at the curve of the ceiling above the altar. Seven ancient paintings; seven deadly sins.

The painting to the far left is of an obese man at a table, shoving food into his gross, gaping mouth. Two rats sit under the table, eating his scraps. It's rendered mostly in ugly green paints and it is amazingly similar to the gluttony murder.

The beam of light moves to the panel to the immediate right: a painting of a man kneeling, grasping at gold coins all around him. The man is naked, as was the victim of the greed murder. The chief color in this panel is a vulgar yellow.

The third in the series is sloth. The painting, in indigo, shows a man at rest in a pliant bed. The skeletal man's eyes are rolled up in their sockets. He is covered in slimy worms.

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH -- LATE AFTERNOON

The streets are full of patrol cars. Cops and forensics enter and exit the church from various doorways. Saw-horses are loaded off a flat-bed truck as a police barrier is erected.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH -- LATE AFTERNOON

Much activity, as forensics with flashlights go about their business, checking every nook and cranny of the church, looking for any sign that someone's been here recently. Small temporary floodlights are hoisted on tripods.

Two photographers stand at the tops of tall ladders. Flash-photo after flash-photo is taken of the seven paneled tableau.

Near the open church doors, Mills speaks with great animation, holding his ream of computer paper. Somerset looks at the altar and the tableau, preoccupied.

MILLS
Our guy's a bookworm, right? And, I know it's a long shot, but you have to give a picture id and current phone bill to get a library card. Hey...

Mills snaps his fingers in Somerset's face, gets his attention.

MILLS (CONT)
I made two separate lists of books. One relating to the sins... Dante's Purgatory, Canterbury Tales... The Dictionary of Catholicism... all the religious stuff. The second list was books about torture methods, mass murderers... sadomasochism. Whatever our killer might study to do the things he's done. Whatever his other interests are.

Somerset takes the computer list.

SOMERSET
So, what is this?

MILLS
Alright. Everything at the library goes into a computer. So, you can get in the system and cross-reference...

Mills fumbles in his pocket, takes out his pad and reads.

MILLS (CONT)
Let's say you take, Dante's Purgatory, call number eight-five-one-D, and... The Biography of the Marquis de Sade, ninety-two S-A-D-E. Put those books in the system, and the computer can give you the name of anyone who's ever taken out both those books. And, it doesn't just give you their name and address, it gives you a complete history of their library reading habits.

Mills slaps the list in Somerset's hand.

MILLS (CONT)
(psyched up)
If somebody's out there reading Paradise Lost and studying The Life and Times of Charlie Manson, I want to talk to them.

Somerset looks up from the list, warming to it. He starts looking around, searching for someone.

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH -- LATE AFTERNOON

Somerset and Mills exit down the stairs. Somerset's still searching, holding the list. He spies a uniformed cop, DARIO.

SOMERSET
Dario! Come here.

Dario runs up. Somerset puts his hand on his shoulder and makes him walk with him. Mills continues on to his car.

SOMERSET (CONT)
According to the Father, this orphanage wasn't around for more than five or six years in the late fifties. So, I want someone to go to the Department of Child Welfare or City Hall and dig up a the records on this place. Understand?

DARIO
I got it.

SOMERSET
Get a list of every child who attended this orphanage before it shut down. Get it on my desk within the hour.

Somerset releases Dario, who runs to obey. Somerset goes to his own car. Mills is driving to leave, stops, revs the engine. Somerset hands the computer list through the window.

SOMERSET
You thought of this all by yourself? This was your brainstorm?

MILLS
Yeah. Is that so hard for you to believe?

SOMERSET
It's a pleasant surprise.

MILLS
I'm not as stupid as I look.

Mills peels away. Somerset heads to his own car.

SOMERSET
(to himself)
I guess not.

INT. SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- EARLY EVENING

Seven large photos hang with the other materials on the wall:

The seven tableau paintings. Gluttony, greed and sloth, followed by vanity. Vanity shows a woman standing in front of a mirror, staring at her image. The floor around her is scattered with flowers. The primary color is violet, and as in all the paintings, there is a quality of ugliness in the character.

MILLS (O.S.)
Ramirez. Manuel Ramirez.

SOMERSET (O.S.)
No... I don't see any Ramirez.

The lust painting is next. It shows a man standing over a woman. The woman is nude, under a sheet, and the man's features are bizarre, lecherous. He wants that woman. There are apples on the floor and on the bed. The color is red.

MILLS (O.S.)
Elinski. Dennis Elinski.

SOMERSET (O.S.)
No.

Envy is particularly gruesome. The Devil is seen hovering in the air, wearing a crown, his body orange and slick, wrapped in a cloak of flames. His arms held high, his right hand grips a sword, a bolt of lightning, arrows, wheat, thistles, etc. His left hand, holds a plain globe around which a serpent has wrapped itself. He looks down at several pitiful mortals in a pit of fire. The mortals reach for him, yearn for him, the skin on their bodies is stretched taunt over their bones.

MILLS (O.S.)
Atwater? Paul Atwater.

SOMERSET (O.S.)
No.

Wrath shows a man surrounded by vaporous, satanic demons. He stands in a puddle of blood, looking at his hands stained with and dripping blood. Other than the rich red, the color is blue.

Mills is at his desk, a good portion of his print-out list draped to the floor. He rubs his eyes, sighing, gets back to it. Somerset, at the temporary desk, studies his orphan list.

MILLS
Okay, here we go. Listen to the books this guy's been taking out...
(reading list)
Basic Homicide Investigation. Forensic Toxicology... The Encyclopedia of Modern Serial Killers...
(looks up, excited)
Of <u>Human</u> <u>Bondage</u>.

SOMERSET
That's not what you think it is.

Mills is disappointed, runs his finger further down the page.

MILLS
Holy shit. Somerset...
(reading list)
The Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas.

Mills points to the drawing of "the Sun in splendor with the eye" which hangs on the wall.

MILLS (CONT)
Aquinas. Right?

SOMERSET
That's right. Let me have it.

Mills looks at the page... searching...

MILLS
Fuck... he used a false name.

SOMERSET
How do you know?

MILLS
His library card lists him as Jonathan Doe. John Doe.

Mills sits back, angry. Something strikes Somerset as odd. Familiar. He starts leafing quickly through the orphanage list.

MILLS (CONT)
What?

Somerset finds what he's looking for.

SOMERSET
Christ... it's like a sick joke.

MILLS
What are you talking about?

SOMERSET
There is one boy here. He was abandoned... no one knew who his parents were, so he was named at the orphanage...
(looks at Mills)
John Doe. It's his legal name.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY -- EARLY EVENING

Somerset and Mills climbs stairs, turn a corner into this hall.

MILLS
It's impossible odds that this is him.

SOMERSET
We're focusing.

MILLS
I know, I know. On one little thing. I'm not complaining. I'll follow anything we get and I'll take it any way we can get it.

SOMERSET
We'll look at him. Ask a few questions. Try to get a feeling whether we should to keep tabs on him.

They reach a door, apartment 3A. Somerset knocks. Mills takes out his gun and looks at Somerset to ask "what do you think?" Somerset nods that he should have the gun ready. Mills steps to the side of the door, knocks hard. Waits.

MILLS
(quietly)
I'll do the talking, right? Let me practice here... um, excuse me Mr. Doe, but, are you by any chance a serial killer? Oh... oh, you are? Well, come with us then, if you don't mind.

Mills smiles at his own wit. A STAIR is HEARD CREAKING offscreen. Mills turns to look towards the stairs.

A MALE FIGURE stands at the top of the stairs, wearing a hat, standing in shadows. The man looks at them, lets out a scream of horror and reaches into his coat.

MILLS (CONT)
Somerset!

GUNFIRE SOUNDS and a bullet slams into door 3A behind Mills. He and Somerset recoil in shock, going to the floor as another bullet explodes, blasting plaster off the wall. The man is HEARD RUNNING back down the stairs.

MILLS (CONT)
It's him! Jesus Christ, we can get this fucker!

Mills jumps up. He moves towards the railing. Somerset sits up and takes out his own gun. The stairwell is silent.

Mills peers over the railing into the stairwell's center, gun pointed. A HEAVY METALLIC CLICK is HEARD. Echoes. Mills leaps backwards as bullets begin raining up from below, accompanied by the SOUND of an UZI SUB-MACHINE GUN FIRING.

Somerset lays flat as he and Mills crawl away from the railing, which is being shredded along with the floor around it. Bullets soar unceasingly. Mills and Somerset hold their hands over their ears. Pieces of wood and plaster fly everywhere. The uzi stops and the man can be HEARD RUNNING again.

Mills gets up, covered in debris. He runs down into the smoky stairwell. Somerset rolls over, gets up more slowly.

EXT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT BUILDING, REAR -- EARLY EVENING

Mills rushes out into this weedy, overgrown courtyard. He sees a thin vagrant sleeping on the building's junk-pile, then looks all directions. His eyes are wild. His gun hand is shaking.

The courtyard is surrounded by alleyways. The shooter could have gone anywhere and is nowhere in sight. Somerset comes out, face wet with sweat. Mills holsters his gun.

MILLS
Are you alright? Are you okay?

SOMERSET
Yeah. I think so.

They look at each other for a long time. Both realizing they came very close to dying.

EXT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT BUILDING, FRONT -- NIGHT

Police cars on scene. Curious civilians have gathered.

INT. JOHN DOE'S BUILDING, STAIRWELL -- NIGHT

UP THE STAIRWELL, several forensics are collecting shell casings, putting them in bags. The casings are scattered all the way up the stairs. ONE FORENSIC walks up beside a COP.

ONE FORENSIC
I hear he's running around with an uzi in one hand and a book of poetry in the other.

COP
A real, modern-day renaissance man, huh?

AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS, two forensics, SARAH and BILLY, wait behind Mills and Somerset. Surgical gloves on all hands. Mills kicks at the door to apartment 3A with all his might. Again.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM ONE -- NIGHT

BOOM -- door flies open. Mills enters with Somerset. Darkness.

MILLS
(to forensics)
Give us first crack at it.

Sarah and Billy wait in the hall. Somerset hits a switch on the wall and a lamp illuminates on a desk. The desk is in the center of the room, facing them. The walls, floor to ceiling, are covered with visual stimuli; pictures, paintings, newspaper articles, sketches, writings on napkins and notebook sheets, etc. Mostly religious images.

The far wall is made of shelves full of books. Mills goes to the desk while Somerset goes to the books. Books: An Overview of Theology, Handbook of Firearms, A History of the World, Summa Theologica, U.S. Criminal Law Review, etc.

Mills looks at the desktop. The surface is marked by dried oil colors. There are tubes of paint laying out, boxes of water colors and pastels. Mills looks at one corner of the desk. An orange candle has been allowed to burn down. The wax trail goes all the way down the edge of the desk to a puddle on the floor.

Somerset walks, studying one wall of pin-ups. There are articles about the seven deadly sins, pages from art books, pencil drawings of Satan and Christ, and drawings of the seven paneled tableau paintings which inspired the murders. Somerset lifts several sheets to note the paper scraps are spaced so tightly and completely that they cover the window.

At the desk, Mills opens the top middle drawer. It's empty except for The Holy Bible. He opens another drawer, which is filled with at least forty empty aspirin bottles.

Somerset looks at a door which is papered over by all the newspaper articles and photographs about the seven deadly sin murders. He opens the door --

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM TWO -- NIGHT

Somerset enters. The ceiling light is on. There are bookshelves on each wall, filled with thousands of notebooks.

Somerset takes one notebooks down. It is a thick composition book with a marbled black and white cover. Inside, the pages are covered in small, handwritten sentences and drawings.

Somerset takes down another notebook and opens it. Same as the first; scribbled sentences and sketches.

He walks to another wall, pulls another notebook. Same deal.

SOMERSET
Jesus Christ.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM ONE -- NIGHT

Mills opens a final drawer to find a rosary and a revolver.

He looks around, nervous and excited, being in the murderer's lair. He goes to a closed door across the room, notices John Doe's bed in the corner. Sees Doe has a cross nailed to the ceiling directly above the bed's pillow.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Mills enters the bathroom. It has been converted into a darkroom, lit by red bulbs, with strips of film hanging from the ceiling. WATER is HEARD DRIPPING.

Mills opens the shower curtain. Prints hang drying, clipped to wires over the tub.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, THE PAINTROOM -- NIGHT

Somerset enters from the room of notebooks. This is John Doe's art studio. Windowless, with several easels holding paintings in various states of completion. The walls are covered with photos and finished canvases, except for one wall which is blank white. Somerset turns the lights off.

There is a 16mm film projector on a table, facing the blank wall. Somerset turns the projector on. It clatters to life, running a piece of film.

The film is spliced into a non-stop loop. Somerset watches the wall, light strobing across him.

The projector shows an image of clouds drifting, with strange, superimposed angels in flowing robes floating jerkily. It's like an old, Hollywood version of heaven.

The image switches abruptly to fire and tormented souls laboring around a pit of molten goo. Like heaven, it's a scratched piece of film from Hollywood's early days.

Somerset turns to examine one of the paintings on an easel. The painting has been skillfully rendered, in small, controlled brush strokes. It shows a modern city street, stylized, dark. The city is peopled by mutated humans and freakish beasts. Sinners in the streets, killing, raping, pillaging. Buildings are burning, blood is being spilled. It's dense with detail.

Somerset walks to another painting which is covered by a drop cloth. He removes the cloth, uncovers a huge canvas. We do not see the painting, but when Somerset does his features turn grim.

MILLS (O.S.)
Somerset!

Mills enters, tormented, weary. He stands in the projector's bright beam, holds an 8" by 10" print.

MILLS (O.S.)
Somerset, we had him. Goddamn it.

He hands a press pass and the photo to Somerset.

MILLS (CONT)
The pass is a fake... we had him.

Somerset looks at the photo, a picture of Mills and Somerset on the stairwell of the slum apartment building; the picture John took when he posed as a reporter.

MILLS (CONT)
We were that close to him.

SOMERSET
I know.

Somerset motions to the huge canvas. Mills looks:

The painting is frightening collage, thick with paint. The photo of Mills and Somerset has been incorporated in bits and pieces. Duplicate images: enlarged eyes, hands, faces. The faces have been ripped, scratched, mutilated. Grainy eyes with holes jabbed in them are mounted in paint beside chopped broken arms. Mills' head is on Somerset's body, and vice versa. It's like a sick, fragmented vision of a slaughter house floor.

EXT. CITY STREETS -- NIGHT

A block of burnt-out row homes and warehouses. Stray, wild dogs roam in a pack. A car turns down this street. It's John Doe's car, moving fast. It's headlights go out and it cruises, avoiding garbage cans in the street.

FOLLOW the dark car. Ahead, a few blocks away, we can see the only lights in this neighborhood, the flashing reds, whites and blues of police activity.

INT. JOHN DOE'S CAR -- NIGHT

John Doe brings the car to a stop. He watches the police at work around the abandoned church. He gives no discernible reaction, puts the car in reverse. He looks behind as he drives back the way he came.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN -- NIGHT

The refrigerator door is open. A male forensic uses tongs to remove Zero's severed hand from behind soda cans and mayonnaise.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM ONE -- NIGHT

The forensic walks through with the hand in a clear plastic bag, past a FEMALE SKETCH ARTIST who puts the finishing touches on a fairly accurate drawing of the balding John Doe.

SKETCH ARTIST
This is the guy?

Mills stands over the artist. Sarah, Billy and two deputy detectives are at work in the room, photographing, searching.

MILLS
Make sure it gets around.

SKETCH ARTIST
You got it. Tomorrow morning, this city's good citizens will be on the lookout for Elmer Fudd.

SARAH
(to Mills)
We can't find anything to hang onto. No pay-stubs, no appointment books or calendars. Not even a book of phone numbers. And, you're not going to believe this...

MILLS
Keep looking.

SARAH
It's just... we haven't found any fingerprints yet. Not one.

MILLS
You know, you're right. I don't believe it. Keep looking.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM TWO -- NIGHT

Somerset reads one of Doe's notebooks. Three cops are looking through other notebooks from the shelves. Mills enters.

SOMERSET
We need to put more men on this.

MILLS
I'm working on it, alright. What have we got?

Somerset bristles slightly at Mills' abrupt demeanor.

SOMERSET
We've got about five thousand notebooks in this room. And, as near as I can tell, each notebook contains two hundred and fifty pages of writing and sketches.

MILLS
Than, he must write about the murders.

Somerset looks at the notebook, reads.

SOMERSET
"What sick, silly puppets we are, and what a gross stage we dance on. What fun we have, dancing around, not a care in the world. Not knowing that we are nothing. We are not what God intended."
(turns pages)
"On the subway today, a man came up to start a conversation. He was making small talk, this lonely man, talking about the weather and other things. I tried to be accommodating, but my head began to hurt from his banality. I almost didn't notice it had happened, but I threw up all over him. And I couldn't stop myself from laughing."
(closes book)
No dates indicated. They're placed on the shelves in no discernible order. He describes a scab on his arm for five pages, then writes about existential philosophy on the next.

Mills walks. He looks into the adjoining paint room.

SOMERSET (CONT)
It's just his mind poured out on paper.

Mills leans in the doorway, looking at Doe's strange artworks.

MILLS
You were right. He is preaching.

The PHONE RINGS in the other room.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM ONE -- NIGHT

All attention is focused on the phone on Doe's desk. A tape recorder is rigged to the receiver. Mills and Somerset enter. Mills walks over, pushes a button on the recorder, picks up.

MILLS
(into phone)
Hello.... hello?

JOHN DOE (V.O.)
(from recorder)
I admire you, David. Imagine my surprise on finding you at my doorstep. I admire you more and more every day.

MILLS
(into phone)
Okay, John. Let's...

JOHN DOE (V.O.)
(from recorder)
No, no, no! You listen and don't talk. I suppose you found the painting and the photos. This is just as well. Now we all know we've all seen each other.
(pause)
I mean what I say. I do admire you.

Long pause. Mills waits.

JOHN DOE (V.O.)
Oh, there is one other thing. Fourteen hundred thirty. West Eighty-sixth street. Apartment six-o-four.

John Doe hangs up.

INT. APARTMENT 604, BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Somerset looks around this femininely decorated bathroom.

In the sink, objects covered in blood: a pair of scissors, a hypodermic needle, first-aid tape and gauze bandages, a bottle of anesthetic for use with the needle, a straight razor.

Somerset moves from the sink, looks in the bathtub. The tub and shower walls are splattered with blood. The tub has a few inches of water in it. The water is cloudy red and bits of gauze float in it. Somerset jiggles the drain's knob.

Some bubbles pop up from the clogged drain.

INT. APARTMENT 604 -- NIGHT

Mills is in a dark mood. He and Doctor O'Neill stand by a WOMAN who hangs by a noose from the ceiling. The woman's head has been bandaged sloppily with white gauze and tape. Her eyes have been left uncovered. The gauze is stained red in small spots.

The woman hangs low, so her feet are inches from the floor where piles of dried flowers and a cordless telephone lay. There's a chair knocked over behind her.

O'Neill's going through his black bag. A violet, velvet curtain has been draped on the wall in the corner, behind a full length mirror. The mirror reflects the corpse. A seven-pointed star is smeared in lipstick on the mirror's surface, with the words I DID NOT KILL HER, SHE WAS GIVEN A CHOICE below.

Somerset enters from the bathroom, looks at the murder display.

MILLS
Pride. Just like in the painting.

Somerset nods. He walks to a dresser. The woman's purse sits open and Somerset extracts her driver's license. He looks at the photo. The woman in the picture is beautiful.

SOMERSET
You can see what he did.

O'Neill steps up to the woman. He brandishes dull scissors. The captain enters with two uniform cops. He looks around, grim, clenching his jaw.

MILLS
Cut her up... dressed the wounds. He put the noose around her neck and stood her on the chair.

SOMERSET
She had the telephone.

MILLS
Call for help, and you'll live. But, you'll be mutilated.

SOMERSET
Or, kick out the chair, and spare yourself a lifetime of hideousness.

O'Neill's cutting the bandages on the woman's face. He pulls them away in front. Mills looks, disgusted by the sight.

Somerset sits in a chair, runs his fingers through his hair.

O'NEILL
He cut off her nose to spite her face. And he did it very recently.

CAPTAIN
Alright, boys, you're running on empty. Go home. Just make sure you sleep with the phone between your knees.

INT. BOOKSTORE -- NIGHT

The bookstore is a labyrinth. Tables and shelves, mountains and valleys of books. Books, new and used, hard and soft, in disorganized groups. CLASSICAL MUSIC PLAYS. A few customers search for titles.

Somerset walks, downcast, winds out of one aisle into another. He has his jacket over his shoulder, runs his fingers along the books as he goes. He pulls one book, The Merchant of Venice, looks at it, replaces it. He looks down the aisle and is surprised to see Tracy.

Tracy stands solemn, scanning book spines. Somerset approaches.

SOMERSET
Tracy?

Tracy brightens a bit upon recognizing him.

TRACY
Somerset. How are you?

SOMERSET
I'm alright. I'm glad to see you found this place. I almost should have expected to run into you here, knowing that you teach English.

Tracy looks up and around.

TRACY
It's so huge. It's amazing.

SOMERSET
This is why I moved into this neighborhood.

TRACY
Don't you love the smell of all the old books. It smells like... like... I guess just old books, but, I love it.

Somerset notices Tracy noticing his gun.

TRACY (CONT)
Forgive me. No matter how often I see guns, I can't get used to them.

SOMERSET
Same here.

Tracy laughs. She looks at her watch.

TRACY
If David's going to be home soon, I should get back.

She starts down the aisle and Somerset walks with her.

TRACY (CONT)
I hope you'll come to dinner another night. Before you leave.

SOMERSET
You can stay and browse a little longer, can't you? I mean...

Tracy considers this as they enter an open area.

SOMERSET (CONT)
I... I hardly know anyone I can talk about books with anymore. I'd appreciate the company.

Tracy stops. Somerset looks hopeful. Tracy is very tempted.

INT. BOOKSTORE -- LATER NIGHT

Shelves and empty aisles of books. CLASSICAL MUSIC still PLAYS.

SOMERSET (O.S.)
The irony is, that after a day of the type of work he did, he's come home and read me these morbid crime stories. Le Fanu's Green Tea. Murders in the Rue Morgue.

MOVE TO the aisle marked MYSTERY, where Somerset and Tracy are leaning against shelves. They both hold books they've selected.

SOMERSET
My mother would give him hell... because I was young, and he was keeping me up till all hours, giving me nightmares.

TRACY
Sounds like a father who wanted his son to follow in his footsteps.

SOMERSET
One birthday, he bought me a hardcover book called The Century of the Detective, by Jurgen Thorwald. It traced the history of detection as a science and it sealed my fate. Because it was real, and that a drop of blood or a piece of hair could solve a crime... was incredible to me.

A CLERK looks down the aisle, then walks on.

CLERK (O.S.)
We're closing up, Somerset.

SOMERSET
Okay, thanks.

TRACY
David's going to wonder where I am.

SOMERSET
I'll give you a ride.

TRACY
No. Please, don't bother.

SOMERSET
I have to insist. If your husband found out I let you ride the subway at this hour he'd tear my head off.

They make their way out of the aisle. Somerset chuckles.

SOMERSET (CONT)
I mean, literally.

EXT. CITY STREET -- NIGHT

Somerset's car stops at the corner of Mills' street.

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- NIGHT

Somerset puts the car in park. Tracy sits for a time, then turns to face Somerset.

TRACY
You've lived here for so long, Somerset. You know this city. I...

Tracy can't quite figure how to put it.

SOMERSET
It's a hard place, Tracy.

TRACY
When David and I lived in Philadelphia, we could afford to live on the outskirts. But now...
(pause)
I hate it here. I feel scared, and I feel sick and... I hate it.

Tracy wants to laugh, like it's silly, but can't pull it off.

SOMERSET
You have to put blinders on sometimes. Most times. But, keep in mind, Tracy, like tonight, there are small pockets of sanity. Some bars and bookstores. Museums. Several last vestiges of civilization.

EXT. CITY STREET -- NIGHT

In Somerset's car, Tracy and Somerset continue talking.

On the other side of the street, closer to the middle of the block, John Doe's car is parallel parked at the curb.

INT. JOHN DOE'S CAR -- NIGHT

Behind the wheel, John Doe is slumped low, calmly watching Somerset and Tracy. He can see them clearly from here.

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- NIGHT

Tracy looks out through the windshield, fighting tears.

TRACY
I've visited so many of the schools, looking for work, you know. And, the conditions are... horrible. I can't believe how bad it is.
(pause)
Children shouldn't have to grow up here.

SOMERSET
You can always look into the private schools. You'll find something.

Somerset gives her a handkerchief. She wipes her tears.

SOMERSET (CONT)
You're too hard on yourself, Tracy.

She will not look at him, keeping herself under control.

SOMERSET (CONT)
It's okay to hate this city. It's natural. But, there is a bright side in all this. There is. You want to hear it?

Tracy is able to muster a small smile.

TRACY
Oh, God, yes. Please.

SOMERSET
I can't think of another place that needs education more than this city. And you're a teacher. You can make a difference in a few people's lives. It's a very good thing.

Tracy leans to give him a kiss on the cheek.

TRACY
Goodnight, Somerset.

They remain close, looking into each other's eyes.

SOMERSET
Goodnight.

Somerset reaches to touch Tracy's face. They kiss. They kiss a long time. Tracy wraps her arms around Somerset's neck. Somerset runs his fingers through Tracy's hair. They share their sorrow. Tracy's tears run down her face. Finally, they part, opening their eyes.

They know this is wrong. Somerset's hands are shaking. He grips the wheel, feels helpless.

SOMERSET
I'm sorry, Tracy. I'm sorry.

Tracy's face is flushed. She is confused.

TRACY
I... I better go.

Tracy gets out, neglects to close the door, not looking back.

Somerset tries to come to his senses. He doesn't understand either, and his heart is aching. He adjusts the rearview mirror to watch Tracy go.

INSERT -- THROUGH REARVIEW MIRROR -- SOMERSET'S P.O.V.

Tracy walks down the block, straightening her hair. She runs.

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- NIGHT

Somerset looks away from the mirror. He holds his head in his hands for a moment.

EXT. CITY STREET -- NIGHT

Somerset leans to pull the door shut, puts the car in gear. He drives, turns the corner.

INT. JOHN DOE'S CAR -- NIGHT

John Doe watches Somerset's car leave. Doe turns his attention to Tracy, who hurries along the other side of the street. Tracy looks back, enters her apartment building, digs out her keys. She gets through the door and climbs stairs, disappearing.

EXT. CITY STREET -- NIGHT

Doe gets out of his car.

He looks both ways down the street, walks towards Mills' and Tracy's building.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- LATER NIGHT

Mills and Tracy are asleep in their bed. Mills' eyes shift under their lids. Rapid eye movement.

A SOUND is HEARD from the other room. Mills awakens. He lays still a moment, then gets up, slowly, reaches to take his gun off the bedside table. He grabs his pants from a chair, slides into them.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM/KITCHENETTE -- NIGHT

Mills opens the bedroom door and enters quietly, gun held up. He moves, crouching.

In the dark, objects in the room and shadows from windows form complex, confusing patterns.

Mills walks between moving boxes, attempting to remain silent. He aims the gun from point to point as he advances.

He gets to a closet. Staying on one side, he opens the door and points his gun. He carefully separates the clothing hanging there. Nothing. No one.

He turns to look over the room. It's the first time we see it in Mills' eyes -- real fear.

The door to the apartment is wide open.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Mills moves from his apartment, gun out, into the dark hallway. The coast is clear. He stays low, moves down the hall. He stops, looks up.

EXT. MILLS' APARTMENT BUILDING, ROOFTOP -- NIGHT

Mills shoves the rooftop door open. It creaks as it swings.

Mills moves out, backwards, looking to top the raised rooftop entrance, covering it with his gun. He moves around, sees nothing, walks to the edge of the roof and looks over.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Mills returns to the bedroom, still holding his gun up. He looks at Tracy asleep in the bed. The room begins to RATTLE a little as a subway train is again passing underground.

He walks to the window and checks the lock. He halts. He opens the window and reaches out. The rattling is a bit LOUDER.

From the fire escape, he picks up a bundle of thorny thistles wrapped with a rubberband. Mills realizes, Doe was here.

INT. SAFE HOUSE -- NIGHT

The room is plain, like the room Mrs. Gold was kept in. The door opens and Tracy and Mills enter. They looks sleepy, carrying suitcases. A uniformed cop closes the door for them.

Mills goes to lay a suitcase on a table while Tracy looks around, depressed, distant. The lighting is bad. There are no decorations, no windows. A wide crack runs down one wall.

Tracy sits down on the bed. Mills notices her discontent.

MILLS
It won't be for long, honey. I swear. This is just till this is over.

TRACY
I know.

Mills goes to sit beside her. He puts his hand on her shoulder.

MILLS
I'm sorry.

Tracy nods. She stands, goes to start turning down the covers.

TRACY
I know. It can't be helped.

Mills feels useless, powerless. He goes to the suitcase and starts unpacking the contents. Tracy continues turning down the sheets.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SATURDAY

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- EARLY MORNING

The chalkboard:

1 ~~gluttony~~
2 ~~greed~~
3 ~~sloth~~
4 ~~pride~~
5 lust
6 envy
7 wrath

Somerset is seated, holding the photo of the lust painting from the tableau. Mills is behind his own desk. They both look like they haven't gotten much sleep.

MILLS
There's two people in that painting. So, maybe he's planning to kill two people this time. Maybe.

Mills looks at Somerset, who doesn't seem to be listening.

MILLS (CONT)
What's wrong this morning?

SOMERSET
Nothing. Sorry.

Somerset looks up, sips from a cup of coffee, looks at the photo. Mills swings his chair, looks out the window at the morning light on the billboard.

MILLS
Lust is next. Lust is sex.

SOMERSET
Apples on the floor. Original sin.

MILLS
Adam and Eve.

Somerset puts the photo down, leans back, takes out a cigarette.

MILLS (CONT)
Sex, sex, sex. Fucking sex.

SOMERSET
Lust is everywhere. That's the hard part. I think lust is the most prevalent sin, even more than greed.

Somerset looks at the burning tip of his cigarette. He gets up to stretch his legs.

Mills picks up the lust photo, puts his feet up on the desk.

MILLS
Lust is red.

Long pause.

SOMERSET
Bright red.

MILLS
Blood red.

SOMERSET
Red sky at night, sailor's delight.

MILLS
Red blooded. Red head. Dead.

SOMERSET
Red light district.

Pause. Realization. Somerset and Mills look at each other.

MILLS
That would make sense.

SOMERSET
It would be fitting.

MILLS
You're damn right it would.

Mills picks up the phone.

EXT. CITY STREETS, PORNO DISTRICT -- AFTERNOON

Porno theaters and Adult Bookstores rule these busy sidewalks. Marquees offer SEXY STUFF, PUSSY FEST and movies like MIDNIGHT PLOWBOY and NATIONAL LAM-PORN'S CHRISTMAS INSERTION. Cops are walking through the pedestrian flow, handing out photocopies. There are many patrol cars on the street. Definitely a larger than usual police presence.

Cops are questioning the proprietors of porn at the entrances of their shops and theaters.

Cops are taping photocopies onto lamp posts. These photocopies are warnings, with the drawing of John Doe's face above a line of information and the words HAVE YOU SEEN THIS MAN?

INT. WILD BILL'S LEATHER SHOPPE -- AFTERNOON

Somerset's holding up the composite sketch of John Doe.

WILD BILL (O.S.)
Yeah, he was here. This morning.

Mills and Somerset are across the sales counter from WILD BILL, 37. Wild Bill is shirtless, covered in tattoos. A thick scar runs down his forehead to his bent nose. Leather belts, whips and jackets hang from the walls.

MILLS
It was definitely him? You're positive?

WILD BILL
Yeah. John Doe. Easy name to remember.

SOMERSET
What was this job you did for him?

Wild Bill pulls a box from behind the counter, digs in it.

WILD BILL
I got a picture of it. That's what he came for this morning. I figured he must be one of those art guys... like those guys who piss in a cup and drink it on stage. Performance art.

Wild Bill gives a polaroid to Mills. We don't see the image.

MILLS
Oh, fuck...

WILD BILL
I think I undercharged him. I was up all night working to finish it.

SOMERSET
(looks at photo)
You built this for him? You built this?

WILD BILL
I've built weirder shit than that.

A BELL CHIMES as a POLICEMAN enters the store.

POLICEMAN
Somerset... we have a situation.

Mills and Somerset follow the policeman out.

WILD BILL
Hey, my picture!

They're gone. Wild Bill scratches his scar.

WILD BILL (CONT)
Pigs.

EXT. THE HOT HOUSE MASSAGE PARLOR -- AFTERNOON

It's a madhouse outside The Hot House. Police action in progress. Cops have formed a barrier, holding off a crowd and creating an aisle to the back of a jail-van. Cops and detectives escort various men, women and transvestites into the large vehicle. The crowd, consisting of the dregs of society, is angry. Some spit and throw trash at the cops.

INT. THE HOT HOUSE, RECEPTION AREA -- AFTERNOON

An ANGRY COP pounds his nightstick on a glass cage. Inside the cage sits an oily FAT MAN in front of a wall of sex toys.

FAT MAN
Just wait!

COP
Get out of the fucking booth!

FAT MAN
Just wait! I'll come out, just wait!

INT. THE HOT HOUSE, CORRIDORS -- AFTERNOON

All the lights and walls are red. Mills and Somerset follow a COP through the twisting corridors. ROCK MUSIC THROBS. They reach a door.

COP
I don't want to go in there again.

INT. THE HOT HOUSE, RED ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Mills and Somerset enter. ROCK MUSIC CONTINUES, LOUD. A strobe light flashes from the ceiling onto TWO AMBULANCE ATTENDANTS. The first attendant places a sheet over a bed, hiding the corpse of a WOMAN with long blonde hair. The second attendant tries to examine the pupils of a CRAZED MAN, 55, who sits naked on the floor, wrapped in a sheet. A COP holds the crazed man down.

CRAZED MAN
He... he... he made me do it!

SECOND ATTENDANT
I have to look at you. I have to look at you.

An X is scratched into the red paint on the wall. Mills and Somerset move towards the covered body.

There are apples on the bed and floor. The ROCK MUSIC from outside SUDDENLY STOPS.

FIRST ATTENDANT
You're not going to want to see this more than once.

CRAZED MAN
He had a gun! He... he made me do it!

The sheet is lifted for the detectives. They grimace at what they see. We do not see. Somerset closes his eyes and walks to face a wall, shaken. The first attendant replaces the sheet.

Mills steps back, takes out his handkerchief and sucks on it.

CRAZED MAN (O.S.,CONT)
He made me do it!

INT. SANATORIUM, WHITE ROOM -- AFTERNOON

A polaroid is on a white table. It is the photo Wild Bill gave to Mills and Somerset. It is a picture of a belt, made with extra leather straps so it can be worn securely around the groin. It is a strap-on phallus, but there is no plastic protuberance. Instead, there is a metal knife. It is a strap-on butcher's knife.

Somerset is seated beside the white table in this white room. Mills stands behind him. The crazed man from the lust murder is in a chair across the room. The crazed man is crying.

CRAZED MAN
And... and... and he said... he asked if I was married. And, I could see he had a gun in his hand.

SOMERSET
Where was the girl?

CRAZED MAN
What? What?

SOMERSET
Where was the prostitute?

CRAZED MAN
She was... she was on the bed. She was just sitting on the bed.

MILLS
Who tied her down? You or him?

CRAZED MAN
He had a gun. He had a gun, and he made it happen. He made me do it!
(more)

CRAZED MAN (CONT)
He made me put it on... that thing. Oh, God... he made me wear it. He had the gun in my mouth.

The man slides off the chair and hides his face in his hands.

CRAZED MAN
The gun was in my throat.

Mills looks at the mirror in the room.

Somerset stands, picks up the polaroid as two men in white uniforms enter to collect the crazed man from off the floor.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- EARLY EVENING

Somerset and Mills are shell-shocked, seated at their desks. Somerset is looking out the window. Mills stares at the wall.

Somerset looks to his temporary desk. He picks up a small pile of mail, sorts through it. An 8" by 10" manila envelope interests him. It reads DETECTIVE SOMERSET on the outside, handwritten in red marker. He opens it.

He takes out a grainy photograph of he and Tracy kissing in his car. It's obviously been taken with a special night-lense.

Somerset goes pale, suppressing a gasp. He holds the photo to hide it from Mills, looks to see Mills has not noticed. He feels panicky, crumples the photo and envelope in his hand.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, MEN'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Somerset enters, latches the door. He takes the crushed photo and envelope from his pocket. He quickly checks under the stalls to see he is alone. He opens a window, goes to the sink.

He takes out his cigarette lighter, lights the envelope and photo, watches them catch. Once they're burning steady he throws them in the sink.

He backs away, leans against the wall, watching, feeling sick.

INT. SPORTS BAR -- NIGHT

Somerset and Mills sit with a full pitcher of beer between them. The JUKEBOX plays QUIETLY for other customers. The walls of the bar are lined with trophies, ribbons and other victory symbols.

SOMERSET
There's not going to be a happy ending. It's not possible.

MILLS
If we get him, I'll be happy enough.

SOMERSET
No. Face it now. Stop thinking it's good guys against the bad guys in this city.

Mills drinks deep, pours more.

MILLS
How can you say that? Especially after today?

SOMERSET
You tell me... when you walk into an apartment, and a man has beaten his wife to death, or, a wife has murdered her husband in cold blood... and you have to wipe the blood off their children. You put the killer in prison. Who won?

MILLS
If I thought like you, I'd have slit my wrists a long time ago.

SOMERSET
Where's the victory?

MILLS
You do your job. Follow the law and do the best you can. It's all there.

SOMERSET
If we caught John Doe tomorrow, and it turned out he was the devil... if it turned out he was literally Satan, then, that might live up to our expectations. No human being could do these horrible things, right?! But, this is not the devil himself. It's only a man.

MILLS
Why don't you shut the fuck up for a while?! Huh? You make these speeches... like you know everything there is to know.

Somerset sits back, looking at Mills.

MILLS (CONT)
You think you're preparing me for the hard times ahead?
(more)

MILLS (CONT)
You think you're toughening me up? Well, you're not!
(pause)
You're quitting, fine... but I'm staying to fight.

SOMERSET
Who are you fighting for? People don't want a champion. They just want to keep playing the lottery and eating hamburgers.

MILLS
What the fuck is wrong with you, huh? What burnt you out?

SOMERSET
There's no one thing, if that's what you mean. I just... I can't live anymore where stupidity is embraced and nurtured as if it were a virtue.

MILLS
You're so much better than everyone, right? No one's worthy of you.

SOMERSET
Wrong! I sympathize completely. Because if you can't win... than, if you don't ignore everything and everyone around you, you go insane. It's easier to smoke crack, and not worry that your wife and kids are starving to death. And, it's so much easier to beat a child till that child finally shuts up, because it takes a lot of work to love. And, if you bothered to think about the abuse, and the damage, you'd be sad.

MILLS
You're talking about people who are mentally ill! You're...

SOMERSET
(cuts in, furious)
No, I am not! I'm talking about common, everyday life here. Where Ignorance isn't bliss, it's a matter of survival.

MILLS
Listen to yourself. You say, "the problem with people is they don't care, so I don't care about people." But, if you're not part of the solution...

SOMERSET
(cuts him off)
People who are in arguments over their heads always use meaningless slogans. But, life doesn't conform to analogies.

MILLS
You're already here, and you've been here a long time. So, there's a part of you that knows, even if everything you say is true, none of it matters.

SOMERSET
That part of me is dead.

Mills stands.

MILLS
Fuck you. You want me to agree with you. "Yeah, you're right, Somerset, this place is fucked. Let's go live in a fucking log cabin!" Well, I don't agree with you. You're quitting, and it makes me sick. Cause, you're the best I've ever seen.

Mills digs out some money and throws it on the table.

MILLS (CONT)
Thanks for the beer.

Mills leaves. Other patrons watch him go. Somerset takes out a cigarette. He goes to light it. The lighter will not light, and when it does, Somerset's hand is shaking.

INT. SAFE HOUSE -- NIGHT

Mills comes quietly into the bedroom. Tracy is asleep in the bed. Mills takes off his jacket, puts it down. He sits on a chair and unties one shoe, takes it off. He looks at Tracy. He looks at her a long time.

He puts the shoe on the floor and goes to get on the bed. He kisses Tracy's forehead, looks at her sleeping innocently. He is touched, saddened. He kisses her cheek, then wraps his arms under and around her. He holds tight, kisses her again. Tracy stirs, awakens.

TRACY
David?

Mills buries his face against her, holding tighter still.

MILLS
I love you.

Tracy holds his face in her hands, sees that he is crying.

TRACY
David?

MILLS
I love you.

Mills clings to her. She wraps her arms around him as he cries quietly against her, and she kisses him, tries to comfort him. He sobs.

EXT. CITY STREETS, INDUSTRIAL AREA -- NIGHT

John Doe walks in this section of huge industrial complexes. Factories and foundries are lined side by side, seemingly for miles. We can HEAR TUGBOAT HORNS sounding low and deep. We're near the water.

Doe seems to know where he's going. He passes stacks of industrial piping and steel drums piled to the sky.

He walks through an industrial junk-yard filled with trashed bulldozers, trucks and discarded factory equipment. It's like a stroll through a bone-yard of dead dinosaurs.

At the end of this field of metal, there is a tall, narrow alleyway formed by two warehouses. Doe enters, looking up at the single lit bulb on the wall above.

He looks at the ground, picks up a rock and a beaten hubcap, walks under the bulb. He throws the hubcap with all his might. It soars, but misses the bulb, falls to the ground behind.

Doe takes aim with the rock. He throws, grunting.

The rock smashes the bulb, bringing darkness to the alley.

Doe walks back to the mouth of the alley. He stops and turns to start from there. He walks, deliberately, looking down at this feet. FOLLOW as he walks.

He stops, looks back to the way he came, then looks down at the ground in front of him again. He takes off his thick glasses.

He holds the glasses in his hand.

INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Somerset is in bed. The metronome is sounding: tick, tick, tick... The SOUNDS of the CITY are LOUD.

Somerset closes his eyes, concentrating on the metronome. Tick, tick, tick... A MAN and a WOMAN are HEARD SCREAMING at each other incoherently from outside. Somerset rolls over, restless. Tick, tick, tick...

A THIRD VOICE is HEARD from outside. This man is screaming at the other two people to shut up. Somerset opens his eyes, sits up. He reaches over, grabs the metronome and throws it against the wall.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SUNDAY

INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- EARLY MORNING

Somerset sits away from the bed. He's smoking a cigarette. The PHONE RINGS. Somerset gets up, not in the best of moods.

SOMERSET
(into phone)
Hello.

TRACY (V.O.)
(from phone, upset)
Hello, Somerset. It's Tracy.

SOMERSET
Is everything alright?

TRACY (V.O.)
Yes. Everything's fine. Could... could you meet me somewhere. To talk.

SOMERSET
(pause)
I don't think that's a good idea.

TRACY (V.O.)
I need to talk to someone, Somerset. You're the only friend I have here. I don't know anyone else.

INT. COFFEE CAFE -- MORNING

Somerset and Tracy are seated in a booth by the window. The city's morning rush passes by outside. The cafe is noisy. Tracy is very upset. Somerset is very uneasy.

SOMERSET
David doesn't know about this? You haven't told him?

Tracy shakes her head. Somerset sighs. Long silence.

SOMERSET (CONT)
I have to tell you, Tracy, I'm not the one to talk with about this.

TRACY
I just can't think straight. I don't know why I called you, except I can't stand to hold it as a secret anymore. I had to get it out... and I can't tell David yet. Not yet.

Somerset takes out his cigarette, but thinks better of it and puts them away. He watches Tracy stir her coffee.

SOMERSET
I... I had a relationship once, very much like a marriage. And, there was a baby. A long time ago. Things were good. And I got up one morning, and I went on a case... a murder, like any other. Except it was my first since hearing about the baby. And, I felt this fear and anxiety coming over me. I looked around and I thought, how can I raise a child here? So, that night, I told her I didn't want us to have children. And, over the next few weeks... I convinced her...

Tears come to Somerset's eyes.

SOMERSET (CONT)
I mean, I wore her down... slowly.

TRACY
I want to have children. But...

SOMERSET
I can tell you, I know... I'm positive I made the right decision. I'm positive it was the right thing to do. But, there's never a day that goes by that I don't wish I had decided differently.

Tracy reaches to hold Somerset's hand, but he withdraws it, wipes his tears away.

SOMERSET (CONT)
If you... if you decide not to have the baby...if that's what you decide, then never tell Mills you were pregnant.
(more)

SOMERSET (CONT)
I mean that. Never tell.
(pause)
Your marriage would just wither, and die altogether.

Tracy looks around the cafe, tears in her eyes.

SOMERSET (CONT)
But, if you decide to have the baby, then, at that very instant, when you're absolutely sure... tell him. Tell him that exact second. And, spoil that kid every chance you get.

TRACY
Somerset...

Somerset stands. He forces a smile.

SOMERSET
That's all the wisdom I can share with you, Tracy. I barely know you.

TRACY
Will I see you again, before you leave?

SOMERSET
Probably not. But, it's probably better that way.

Somerset steps away, leaves. Tracy watches him go.

EXT. CITY STREET -- DAY

Mills and Somerset walk towards the precinct house. They wade through cars to cross the street.

SOMERSET
I've decided... I want to stay on, till this is over. Till either it's done, or we can see it will never end.

Mills remains impassive.

MILLS
Oh, you want to stay now?

SOMERSET
One of two things is going to happen. We're either going to get John Doe... or, he will finish his series of seven, and he'll never be found.

MILLS
You think if you stay you're doing me some big favor?

SOMERSET
I'm requesting you keep me on as your partner a few more days. You'd be doing me the favor.

MILLS
You knew I'd say yes.

SOMERSET
No. I wasn't sure at all.

They enter the precinct house. Down the sidewalk, from a distance, comes John Doe. His brown workboots and clothing are covered in dried blood.

He walks towards the precinct house, hands in his pockets, like he's merely out for a walk on a Sunday afternoon. People on the sidewalk stop upon seeing him, avoiding him.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, RECEIVING LOBBY/BOOKING -- DAY

Mills and Somerset walk past booking cubicles and benches of handcuffed low-lifes. The place is swimming with activity.

The two detectives head to a duty desk at the end of the room.

SOMERSET
As soon as this is over, I'll be gone.

MILLS
What a great big surprise that is.

They pass through a gate and Somerset goes to the staircase leading to the second floor. Mills stops at the duty desk. Other cops are fighting for the DUTY SERGEANT'S attention.

MILLS (CONT)
Mills and Somerset are on the premises.

SERGEANT
Wonder-fucking-ful.

Mills walks to follow Somerset.

JOHN DOE (O.S.)
Detective David Mills!

Mills stops, looks. Somerset looks back down the stairs.

John Doe stands inside the precinct house doors. He holds out his arms as if to say "presto, here I am."

Near silence comes to the room as all eyes go to the figure of John Doe.

Mills is riveted, finding this impossible to comprehend.

One UNIFORMED COP takes out his gun, points it at Doe.

UNIFORM COP
It's him!

Several other cops drop what they're doing and draw weapons. Mills, still off-balance, walks back through the gate, takes his own gun out and points it at Doe.

MILLS
Get down on the floor.

Somerset comes back down the stairs.

SOMERSET
Be careful!

Cops move slowly in on Doe from all sides.

ANOTHER COP
You heard him! Get on the floor!

John Doe gets on his knees, hands up. Mills moves close, but not too. ONE COP comes from behind, nudges Doe with his foot.

ONE COP
Spread you legs and get your hands out in front of you.

MILLS
Get down! Face down!

John Doe gets on his stomach, obeys. Mills comes right up to Doe, steps on his neck, puts his gun against Doe's head.

MILLS (CONT)
Don't move. Don't move a fucking inch.

Cops frisk and handcuff Doe. Somerset comes beside Mills.

SOMERSET
I don't believe it.

JOHN DOE
Hello, Lieutenant Somerset.

COP
What the hell is this?

The cop putting the handcuffs on Doe holds up Doe's hands. Doe winces. Every single one of Doe's fingers has a bandage wrapped around it. John Doe looks up, his face pressed against the floor, glasses askew, Mills' gun at his temple.

JOHN DOE
I want to speak with my lawyer.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, OBSERVATION ROOM -- DAY

Mills, Somerset and the captain stand in darkness.

On the other side of a two-way mirror, John Doe is seated in a restraining chair in an interrogation room. His hands and legs are bound with leather straps to the chair's arm and legs. A strap hold tight around Doe's throat. This is not some superman/serial killer. He looks more like an eccentric college professor. His lawyer MARK SWARR, 43, sits at a table, taking notes.

Mills holds a fingerprint card. The black ink prints are just useless blobs with traces of blood in them.

CAPTAIN
He cuts off the skin of his fingertips. That's why we can't find a single usable print in his apartment. For a long time, he's been cutting before the papillary lines can grow back.

MILLS
What about the trace on his bank account? The guns?

CAPTAIN
The orphanage is all we have. His bank account is only five years old and it started as cash. There's no credit history, no employment history. We even tried to trace his furniture. All we know for sure is he's wealthy, well educated and totally insane. We may never know how he got that way.

Somerset stands looking in at Doe.

SOMERSET
Because he is John Doe, by choice.

MILLS
When do we get to question him?

CAPTAIN
You don't. This goes to court now.

MILLS
This doesn't make sense, captain. He wouldn't just turn himself in!

CAPTAIN
Well, there he sits. It's not supposed to make sense.

MILLS
He's not finished!

CAPTAIN
You're wound way too tight on this, Mills.

MILLS
Somerset... help me out here.

Somerset looks at them. Says nothing.

CAPTAIN
It's over.

The captain leaves. Mills is furious.

MILLS
Damn it, Somerset. You know Johnny's fucking with us. He's pissing in our faces again!

SOMERSET
Slow up. You and I are, probably for the first time ever, in total agreement. He wouldn't just stop.

MILLS
Well... what the fuck, man?

SOMERSET
John Doe's only two murders away from finishing his masterpiece, right? But, can you even conceive of what might happen next? I mean, can you tell me how he's going to go about it?

MILLS
(pause)
No.

SOMERSET
I can tell you this; I recognize his lawyer. His name is Mark Swarr. He's the one who kept Zero out of prison.
(beat)
We'll wait for John Doe's plea.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- DAY

Mills is at the desk with his feet up, stares at the chalkboard:

1 ~~gluttony~~	5 ~~lust~~
2 ~~greed~~	6 wrath
3 ~~sloth~~	7 envy
4 ~~pride~~	

Clock on the wall says 4:45. Somerset packs books into boxes, preparing for his eventual departure. The captain opens the door and steps into the office. He clears his throat, looking like there is something very wrong.

INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE -- DAY

Mills and Somerset stand together. The captain is behind his desk with the D.A., Martin Talbot, seated in front of him. Mark Swarr addresses them all, seems nervous, but in control.

SWARR
My client says there are two more bodies... two more dead, hidden away. He will take Detective Mills to these bodies, but only Detective Mills. Only at six o'clock, today.

Swarr wipes his brow with a handkerchief.

TALBOT
Oh, Christ.

MILLS
Why me?

SWARR
He says he admires you.

SOMERSET
(to captain)
This is all part of his game plan.

SWARR
Mr. Doe claims that if the detective does not accept this offer, the bodies will never be found.

CAPTAIN
Frankly, counselor, I'm inclined to let them rot.

Mills walks up into Swarr's face.

MILLS
You like what you do for a living?

CAPTAIN
Back off, Mills.

SWARR
I'm required by law to serve my clients to the best of my ability, and to serve their interests.

Mills eases off. Talbot is agitated, tapping a finger on the gold tooth in his mouth. He looks at Swarr.

TALBOT
We don't make deals like this.

CAPTAIN
We're going to have to pass.

SWARR
My client... he also wishes that I inform you, if you do not accept, he will plead insanity, across the board.

TALBOT
Let him try. I'd like to see him try!

SWARR
Come now, Martin. Even he knows, with the nature of these crimes, I could get him off on such a plea.

Talbot stands, wringing his hands. Mills and Somerset are looking at each other, thinking it over.

TALBOT
I'm not letting this conviction slide. I can tell you that, right here and right now!

SWARR
He says, if you accept, under his specific conditions, he will sign a full confession and plead guilty... right here, and right now.

Talbot looks at Swarr with hatred.

MILLS
I'll do it.

SOMERSET
Hold on... just a minute.

Somerset turn to Talbot.

SOMERSET (CONT)
If he were to plead insanity... this conversation is admissible. The fact that he's blackmailing us with his plea...

SWARR
And, my client reminds you, two more people are dead. The press would have a field day if they found out the police didn't seem very concerned about finding them... giving them proper burial.

MILLS
I'll do it. I want to finish it.

Somerset is thinking it through. He looks at Mills.

SOMERSET
(to captain)
Well... let's get the fucking lawyer out of the room, and we can talk about how this is going to go down.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, BATHROOM -- LATE AFTERNOON

Mills' hand reaches to the sink to pick up a razor. He's shirtless, his chest covered in shaving cream. He starts shaving in front of a mirror. Somerset is behind him, smoking.

SOMERSET
If John Doe's head splits open, and a U.F.O. flies out, I want you to have expected it.

MILLS
I will.

SOMERSET
No emotion. Stay as cold as ice.

MILLS
I will.

Somerset flicks ash in a sink. Mills finishes shaving. He steps away from the sink and wipes his chest off with a towel.

MILLS
(very serious)
Listen, Somerset... we've been through a lot together. And, I uh...

SOMERSET
What is it?

MILLS
I would like to make sweet love to you.

Somerset walks away. Mills laughs.

SOMERSET
Please...

As they leave.

MILLS
Give me a kiss on the lips.

SOMERSET
Give me a break.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, READY ROOM -- LATE AFTERNOON

Mills has his shirt off. A female technician, Josie, tapes a radio transmitter and wired microphone to his chest.

Somerset sits nearby at one of the ready room desks. He wears a bullet-proof vest, is just finishing a check of his gun. He's putting the bullets back into it.

Josie finishes prepping Mills. Mills presses the adhesive, making sure it will hold. He puts on a shirt and bullet-proof vest, fastens the velcro.

Somerset stands, puts his gun in his hip holster.

Mills picks up his own gun, checks it, holsters it. He watches Somerset take out a roll of antacids. Somerset pops a few.

SOMERSET
Ready?

MILLS
Extremely.

They look at each other. Mills holds out his hand. They shake on it.

EXT. CITY STREET, IN FRONT OF PRECINCT HOUSE -- LATE AFTERNOON

The street is full of shadows as the sun is falling low. On the steps of the precinct house, a throng of reporters shifts anxiously. A line of policemen holds them back. The precinct doors open. Martin Talbot arrives, escorted by cops. The press swarm lurches forward, flashbulbs explode.

Talbot holds out his hands, quieting them, about to speak.

EXT. CITY STREET, AT BACK OF PRECINCT HOUSE -- LATE AFTERNOON

Mills' car pulls out of the fenced parking lot. John Doe is seated in the rear.

The car speeds up on the street, turns onto an avenue, heading into a canyon formed by tall buildings. At the corner, a car is parked.

Somerset is at the wheel. He pulls out, follows Mills' car.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP -- LATE AFTERNOON

California is dressed in full battle gear. He looks through binoculars at the city below. The wind blows hard.

He turns and runs to a sleek helicopter on the roof's heli-pad, climbs in the side door. The PILOT leans back from the cockpit to hand him a helmet. California dons it, starts strapping himself in so he can lean out the open door.

CALIFORNIA
Is this wind going to hurt us?

The pilot cranks the helicopter's whining engine and the blades start to spin, churning the air.

PILOT
Just makes the ride a little more fun.

California hefts a high-powered automatic rifle as the chopper lifts from the pad and takes off.

INT. MILLS' CAR -- LATE AFTERNOON

Mills drives, looking to the back seat through the rearview mirror. A steel mesh partition separates front from back.

John Doe sits with his hands cuffed. He is dressed in gray pants and a gray shirt. His feet are cuffed to a metal fastener on the floor of the car. Rivulets of sweat pour down his face. He seems wired.

MILLS
What's your story, Johnny? Who are you, really?

Doe pushes his glasses back up the bridge of his nose, looks at Mills' eyes in the rearview mirror.

JOHN DOE
It doesn't matter who I am. Who I am means absolutely nothing.

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- LATE AFTERNOON

Somerset adjusts the volume on a radio receiver mounted on the dash. He watches the road ahead, tailing Mills.

MILLS (V.O.)
(from receiver)
What's your deal? You seem pretty fucking nervous.

JOHN DOE (V.O.)
(from receiver)
I want this to go well. It's very important to me, obviously.

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- LATE AFTERNOON

The chopper hovers amongst skyscrapers. California and the pilot are listening, through their helmet headsets.

MILLS (V.O.)
(from headset)
You want this to go well? What is this?

JOHN DOE (V.O.)
(from headset)
Turn right on this street. Stay in the left lane.

California leans out the chopper door, using his binoculars.

EXT. CITY STREET -- LATE AFTERNOON

Mills' weaves through traffic.

Somerset's car isn't far behind, goes through a red light, barely missing a truck. Other cars blow their horns.

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- LATE AFTERNOON

A cellular phone on the passenger side is BEEPING. Somerset pushes a button on the phone's panel. He puts on a headset/telephone, speaks into the mouthpiece.

SOMERSET
I'm here.

CALIFORNIA (V.O.)
(from headset)
Downtown and moving west. Looks like you're going to be crossing water.

SOMERSET
If we're on the bridge, you keep your distance. You hear me?

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- LATE AFTERNOON

The helicopter hovers steady. California stows his binoculars.

SOMERSET (V.O.)
(from headset)
Cross the river before us if necessary.

CALIFORNIA
You got it.

California taps the pilot's helmet.

EXT. CITY SKY -- LATE AFTERNOON

The helicopter dips, flying like a bullet over the city skyline, heading towards the river and the setting sun.

EXT. CITY STREETS -- LATE AFTERNOON

FROM HIGH ABOVE, we see traffic on the highway at the polluted river's edge. Cars and trucks move like blood through veins.

DOWN CLOSER, we can see Mills' car in the flow. The car turns into a lane of traffic on its way to the huge suspension bridge.

Somerset's car is in close pursuit.

UNDER THE BRIDGE, the police helicopter travels close to the water, moving parallel to the bridge, but low, so that it's out of the sightline of the vehicles above.

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- LATE AFTERNOON

Traffic is bumper to bumper. Somerset moves his headset mouthpiece to smoke a cigarette. He steers onto the bridge, under the massive girders.

MILLS (V.O.)
(from receiver)
For us to go pick up two more dead bodies, and have that be the end of it... just seems too boring for you.

INT. MILLS' CAR -- LATE AFTERNOON

Beyond the crest of the bridge, the sunset is crimson.

MILLS
Wouldn't be sensational enough.

JOHN DOE
Wanting people to pay attention, you can't just tap them on the shoulder.

John Doe strains to turn, looks out the back window.

JOHN DOE (CONT)
Sometimes you have to hit them in the head with a sledgehammer... and then you get their strict attention.

MILLS
What are you looking at, Johnny?

JOHN DOE
Looking back... at the city proper...

Doe situates forward, holds his hands in front of his face, looking at his bandaged fingers.

JOHN DOE (CONT)
And yet, no pillar of salt.
(smiles to himself)
Lost on you, isn't it? You've never read the Bible, have you, David?

MILLS
I remember a lot of people reading it <u>at</u> me when I was a kid. I preferred the classic comic version myself.

This is an affront to Doe, angers him. Mills sees it, likes it.

MILLS (CONT)
I used to have "Godspell" on an eight-track tape. Does that count?

Doe leans forwards, fury building in him.

JOHN DOE
You make me sick.

MILLS
Sit back, freak.

Mills slams his fist against the partition. Doe sits back.

JOHN DOE
(under his breath)
Ignorant heathen.

MILLS
Right, right. I forgot. You think these murders were for God. Right?
(pause)
I'm asking you seriously. You really think what you did is God's good work?

Doe looks out the window at other cars, refuses to answer.

He's pressing the tips of his forefingers into his thumbs, causing blood to drip from under the bandages.

JOHN DOE
The Lord works in mysterious ways.

EXT. CITY STREETS, INDUSTRIAL AREA -- NIGHT

It's getting dark. We've been in this section of factories before, with John Doe. The police helicopter soars overhead.

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- NIGHT

California's looking down, wearing night-vision goggles.

INSERT -- CALIFORNIA'S P.O.V. -- THROUGH GOGGLES

The goggles allow California to see clearly into the maze formed by buildings, yards and worksheds below. No one in sight.

CALIFORNIA (O.S.)
Fuck, man... there's about a thousand places to be ambushed out here.

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- NIGHT

The headlights are off. Mills' car's red brake lights are far ahead on this industrial road.

CALIFORNIA (V.O.)
(from headset)
I don't see anything... not yet.

SOMERSET
(in mouthpiece)
A quick sweep is all we get. Clear out now. You're right in front of us.

Somerset reaches to turn up the volume on his radio receiver. Mills is HEARD SINGING "Jesus Christ Superstar," loud. Somerset allows a very faint smile.

INT. MILLS' CAR -- NIGHT

Mills drives along, singing.

MILLS
Jesus Christ, Superstar... who in the world do you think you are? Jesus Christ, Superstar...

Doe's in the back seat, trying to bare it, steaming.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL SKIES -- NIGHT

The chopper goes high, away, over the industrial area.

It moves to the other side of the factories and settles in low over the river.

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- NIGHT

Mills' tune comes to a conclusion. Somerset slows the car as he sees Mills' brake lights go on ahead.

JOHN DOE (V.O.)
(from receiver)
We can walk from here.

SOMERSET
(in mouthpiece)
You stay out of this unless I call you in, California. Understand?

CALIFORNIA (V.O.)
(from headset)
You're in charge.

Somerset takes off the headset/phone, stops the car.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL ROAD, AT SOMERSET'S CAR -- NIGHT

Somerset gets out. He looks through binoculars.

INSERT -- SOMERSET'S P.O.V. -- THROUGH BINOCULARS

Mills' car has stopped under the lights of a junk-yard. Mills gets out. He walks to unlock the passenger door.

MILLS (V.O.)
(from receiver)
Alright, Somerset. Going for a stroll.

AT MILL'S CAR

Mills opens the passenger door. Doe looks out.

MILLS
Lean on your side. Hands behind your head and lock your fingers together.

Doe obliges. Mills moves to unchain Doe's feet, cautious.

INSERT -- SOMERSET'S P.O.V. -- THROUGH BINOCULARS

Mills lets Doe out. Doe does a deep knee bend to loosen his legs. Mills takes out his gun.

MILLS (V.O.)
(from receiver)
Where are we going?

Doe points with handcuffed hands, at a path through the junk-yard, towards warehouses. Mills motions with his gun.

MILLS (V.O.,CONT)
(from receiver)
Lead the way.

Doe starts walking. Mills follows, keeping the gun on Doe. We lose sight of them behind the junk-yard's massive pieces.

AT SOMERSET'S CAR

Somerset lowers his binoculars. He gets back in the car, leaves the lights off, drives slowly towards Mills' car.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL AREA, JUNK-YARD -- NIGHT

Mills follows Doe past rusting collections of machines. We took this walk with Doe before, through this metallic bone-yard.

JOHN DOE
It's right this way.

Mills is on edge. His eyes search the towering, twisted junk. Sharp edges reach for the sky. Glass breaks under their feet.

MILLS
So far, so good.

SOUNDS of BOATS on the river can be HEARD. Doe's heading for the alleyway created by two warehouses beyond the junk-yard.

Doe nears the alleyway. It is pitch dark. Doe stops before entering, turns to Mills.

JOHN DOE
In here.

Mills steps up, keeping his distance from Doe. He can't see a thing in the blackness ahead.

MILLS
You go first.

Doe faces the alley. He starts walking. We MOVE with him as he goes. He's counting silently to himself, moving his lips.

Mills walks behind Doe, keeping a sharp eye out in all directions. He's about ten feet behind Doe, keeping his gun trained on the back of Doe's skull.

MILLS (CONT)
Tell me where we're going.

Doe continues walking, counting his steps, a bit quicker.

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- NIGHT

Somerset has pulled along Mills' car, at the junk-yard.

MILLS (V.O.)
(from receiver)
Slow down, Johnny. Stop right there.
(pause)
I said stop!

EXT. WAREHOUSE ALLEYWAY -- NIGHT

Doe walks on. Mills is behind, walking to close the gap. We can HEAR the faint SOUND of RUSHING WATER.

MILLS
I'll blow your head off right now!

Doe stops abruptly. He spins on his heels, facing Mills.

Mills is getting closer, pumped, ready to pull the trigger.

Doe reaches up with his hands, takes off his glasses. He holds them in one hand. The SOUND of the WATER is LOUDER.

Mills is about six feet from Doe, and knows something's wrong.

John Doe smiles.

MILLS (CONT)
What...

Doe takes one step backwards and falls, straight down, disappears in the blink of an eye.

MILLS (CONT)
No!

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- NIGHT

Somerset looks towards the far off alleyway, horrified.

MILLS (V.O.)
(from receiver)
Motherfucker! No!

INT. WAREHOUSE ALLEYWAY -- NIGHT

Mills stands facing the <u>open manhole cover</u> Doe disappeared into.

A torrent of water rushes by underground. Mills fires a few futile shots into the water, out of his mind with rage. He pulls back the top of his bullet-proof vest, exposing the microphone.

MILLS
He's gone, Somerset! He's in the water!

EXT. INDUSTRIAL ROAD, SOMERSET'S CAR -- NIGHT

Somerset leaps out, takes out his gun. FOLLOW as he runs into the junk-yard as fast as he can.

MILLS (V.O.)
(from receiver)
I'm going in!

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- NIGHT

The chopper's over the river. California listens intently.

MILLS (V.O.)
(from headset)
I have to go in after him!

STATIC CRACKLES LOUD in his headset, then it GOES DEAD. California grips his mouthpiece.

CALIFORNIA
Somerset, what's going on down there?!

INT. UNDERGROUND WATERWAY -- NIGHT

An underground pipe-way. Mills tries to swim, is mostly carried in the flow. He's battered against the sides of the pipe, holding his breath desperately.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL JUNK-YARD -- NIGHT

FOLLOW Somerset as he charges onwards through the junk-yard, stumbling over pieces of metal. He runs towards the alleyway.

INT. UNDERGROUND WATERWORKS -- NIGHT

WATER ROARS. A square pool of water churns. A moment, then Mills rises, gasping, choking. He's disoriented, furious, waving his gun, expecting Doe to be right on top of him.

No one around. Mills looks. This is some sort of unmanned water switching station. The walls are covered in catwalks, drainage pipes and tunnels. Some tunnels and pipes spew water down into the central pool, others are sealed shut.

Mills pulls himself from the central pool to a concrete spillway. He stands up, searching. Doe could be anywhere.

MILLS
Come on, Johnny! I'm right here!

INT. UNDERGROUND WATERWORKS TUNNEL -- NIGHT

There is a plastic bag with an automatic pistol and extra clip inside hanging from a protruding shut-off valve. John Doe's hands tear the bag open, taking the contents.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ALLEYWAY -- NIGHT

Somerset enters the alley, short of breath. He points his gun in front of him, fearful. Moving slowly.

SOMERSET
Mills!

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- NIGHT

California is enraged, looks towards the pilot.

CALIFORNIA
God damn it! Let's do something!

PILOT
Somerset said wait!

CALIFORNIA
Fuck that! Let's go!

PILOT
Where?

CALIFORNIA
I don't know! Just go!

INT. UNDERGROUND WATERWORKS -- NIGHT

Mills climbs onto a catwalk. He passes tunnels, looking down each, intense, ready to kill. A waterfall flows and over the other end of the catwalk.

Mills stands, looking over the railing at the central pool and other tunnels. He points his gun and fires into a far tunnel.

MILLS
Come on! Let's do it! You and me!

A figure appears in the center of the waterfall behind Mills.

MILLS (CONT)
I'm not going to let you win this!

John Doe steps out of the waterfall, putting on his glasses.

He seems calm, unloads his gun into Mills' back... BLAM, BLAM...

Mills twists, blown forward by the bullets slamming into his bullet-proof vest. BLAM, BLAM, BLAM... he stumbles, trying to turn and fire back, but bullets strike him down and he falls to the floor of the catwalk, gun falling from his hand.

CLICK. Doe's gun is empty. The gunshots echo. Mills lays there on his stomach, pounded, blacking out, the hot bullets in his vest smoking and sizzling from the water splashing them.

Doe moves quickly, starts searching Mills' pockets.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ALLEYWAY -- NIGHT

Somerset comes upon the open manhole. Water rushes by.

SOMERSET
Christ.

INT. UNDERGROUND WATERWORKS -- NIGHT

The central pool bubbles, undulating. Somerset surfaces, inhaling, bringing his gun up. He looks. No one in sight.

SOMERSET
Mills! Pull out!

His voice reverberates, barely heard against the roaring water. He swims to the edge, climbs out. He walks, looking...

SOMERSET (CONT)
(pleading)
Pull out now!

Somerset looks up, and freezes up on seeing --

-- Doe's handcuffs hang, swinging, on the rail of the catwalk above, with Mills' radio transmitter and wire tied to them.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL JUNK-YARD -- NIGHT

Somerset runs to his car, driven, gasping for breath, still soaking wet. He stops for one second, looks.

Not too far away, the police helicopter flies low to the ground, turning in wide circles.

Somerset climbs into the car, starts it up. He drives away, leaving his lights off. The engine protests loudly, forced to it limit. The car disappears in darkness.

The police helicopter circles, useless.

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH/ORPHANAGE -- NIGHT

The church stands elegant at night, when its decayed state is partially hidden. Small shafts of light escape from holes in the facade and jut into the blackness.

Somerset is out of his car. He strides towards the church, checks his gun as he goes. FOLLOW with him, getting closer to the church. He climbs the stairs.

Somerset steps up and kicks the church doors open, met by a tremendous blast of light --

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH -- NIGHT

Flickering orange light from hundreds of once tall orange candles, now burnt low. They greet Somerset, in the church's old candle racks, on the floor, on the altar and all through out the pews.

Somerset's eyes try to adjust to the light. He holds his gun ready, walks down the long center aisle.

JOHN DOE (O.S.)
Hello, Somerset.

Doe sounds far, his voice echoing from the front of the church.

SOMERSET
Where's David?

JOHN DOE (O.S.)
He's here. With me.

SOMERSET
Tell me what you want.

Somerset can see through the heat warp. Doe stands facing him from the altar.

JOHN DOE
What do I want? The same you... I want an ending. Stay where you are. Put your gun on the floor and slide it all the way down here.

Somerset obeys, bends, slides the gun down the aisle till it hits the bottom altar stair. He keeps walking, slowly.

SOMERSET
I want to see him. Show me Mills.

On the altar, Doe is sweating hard, standing over Mills. Mills is slumped forward on the floor, unconscious. His bullet-proof vest has been removed.

Mills' hands are tied tight together in front of him, tied to one end of the thick rope suspended from the ceiling. Doe holds the other end of the rope, has his gun tucked under his belt.

JOHN DOE
You're an intelligent man, Somerset. You understand what you're a part of, don't you? When this is finished, it will seem surreal, but it will be a whole, crystalline reality. And, no one will be able to deny it, no matter how hard they try.

Doe's voice is thick with passion. Somerset is about halfway down the aisle, still moving.

SOMERSET
You're a murderer. That's all. The only way you've distinguished yourself is by your particular brutality.

Doe walks across the altar.

JOHN DOE
You know that's not true. You know.

SOMERSET
You're killing innocent people, and I should admire you? You're doing it because it give you pleasure. That's the only purpose... your sick pleasure.

Doe picks up a container of gasoline, looks out at Somerset.

JOHN DOE
Stay where you are!

Somerset stops.

JOHN DOE (CONT)
I won't deny my personal desires. I won't.

Doe begins dousing Mills with gasoline, covering Mills' body and clothing. Mills stirs, coming to. He coughs, choking on the gas and fumes.

JOHN DOE (CONT)
But, I don't mourn the victims in this any more than I mourn the <u>thousands</u> who died in Sodom and Gomorrah.

Somerset looks fearful. He starts approaching again.

SOMERSET
All you've done is cause more misery and pain! You've given people all the more reason to believe there is no God!

Somerset eyes his gun at the bottom of the stairs.

Doe sees Somerset moving, throws the gas can away, takes out his gun. Doe walks to the edge of the altar, all the time holding his end of the rope.

JOHN DOE
Stop!

Somerset is twitching with anger, looking at the gun about fifteen feet in front of him.

Mills manages to look up, weak, his eyes barely able to open because of the stinging gasoline.

MILLS
Somerset?

Doe takes one step down off the altar. Somerset is still edging forward, hands out away from his body.

SOMERSET
Do you really think I'm just going to let this happen?! You think I'm going to let him die?

JOHN DOE
Yes.

Doe fires his gun and the bullet slams into the front of Somerset's bullet-proof vest. Somerset flies back, knocking over a rack of candles on his way to the floor.

Doe walks quickly back onto the altar.

MILLS
Motherfucker!

Mills tries to grab at Doe as he passes, but Doe turns and kicks Mills in the ribs. Mills cringes in pain.

Somerset lays in the aisle, on his stomach, gasping. He can't catch his breath, his twisted face pressed against the floor.

JOHN DOE
How can you speak of God, Somerset? When was the last time you spoke his name?

Mills tries to rub the gas out of his eyes with his bound hands.

His mind works feverishly. He looks around to see where he is, then he searches the floor. We can see, inside his open shirt, the bleeding, upside-down cross Doe has cut into his chest.

Doe walks back to shout angrily down at Somerset.

JOHN DOE (CONT)
When did you last speak His name? Was it in prayer? Or, did you say the Lord's name after you stubbed your big toe? Or, did you use His name to curse another man?

Somerset holds his chest, blinking, trying not to black out.

Mills finds a piece of broken stained glass on the floor. He picks it up, palms it, still chocking on gasoline.

Doe walks over to the statue of Saint Jerome Emiliani, pulling the rope from above so it goes taunt and Mills' arms raise above his head. Doe wraps the rope around Emiliani's arm.

MILLS
I'm going to kill you, Johnny. I'm going to see you dead.

Doe begins twisting the loose end of rope around the statue.

JOHN DOE
The irony, David, is that you policemen and I want the same things. But, you are so short sighted. In this city, where you can see a deadly sin on every street corner... and in every home, we want repentance.

Mills clutches the glass piece and starts cutting the rope just above his hands.

JOHN DOE (CONT)
We want good over evil. We want values instilled in the children. We want a world where a man or woman can lead a decent life.
(pause)
Wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. Such simple concepts. Why are they non-existent?

Somerset manages to lift his head, struggles to his knees.

SOMERSET
(weakly)
Let him go, God damn you.

Doe checks to make the rope around Saint Emiliani is secure, tightening the knots.

JOHN DOE
There were two men once, who had wonderful gardens. Two gardens of flowers that went on as far as the eye could see. Beautiful gardens... the fragrance was inspiration in itself.

Doe stands behind Emiliani, heaves against the statue.

Mills watches, gritting his teeth, rubbing the glass against the rope, fingers bleeding.

JOHN DOE (CONT)
But, both gardens were beset by problems. Weeds started to take root, and there were infestations of insects and diseases. The gardens started to turn putrid. And, one man fought to save his garden, because he could never forget how it once was. Everyday he cut the weeds, and killed the insects. Fought the diseases.

Doe finally topples the statue, down the altar stairs, and the other end of the rope pulls Mills upwards, screaming in pain. Mills is held, about eight feet in the air, legs dangling.

JOHN DOE (CONT)
That man never had a beautiful garden again.

MILLS
Fuck you!

JOHN DOE
The other man plowed his garden under.
(pause)
He plowed it under the soil. He started over.

Somerset gets to his feet, steadying himself on a pew.

Doe walks across the altar, picks up a long metal pole with a thick wick and candle snuffer on the end. He lights the wick from a near candle. The flame burns long and thin. He looks down at Somerset, takes out his gun.

JOHN DOE (CONT)
Stay there, Somerset. Or, I'll kill him right now.

Doe holds the flaming pole up, near Mills.

Somerset stops. He looks up at Mills.

Mills is straining. He nods to Somerset, and Somerset sees Mills cutting at the rope.

SOMERSET
Alright... you don't have to do this, John. You've already made your point.

JOHN DOE
Do you think I chose this? Can you even begin to understand how painful my existence has been? It's like... like having every sense heightened beyond comprehension.

Doe lowers the flame, standing below and beside Mills, with his attention focused on Somerset.

JOHN DOE (CONT)
So that the stench of the street coats your throat like bile. So, sugar is so sweet it... it makes your bones ache to the marrow.

SOMERSET
You're insane. That's why.

JOHN DOE
(seething)
No! You're wrong!

Mills continues cutting, bleeding, almost through the rope. He begins to swing his feet slightly, his body swaying.

JOHN DOE (CONT)
I was chosen. And I've wished a thousand times I could have been a normal man. Like David Mills, a common man... with a common life. But, wishing that is my sin. I can't have it and I shouldn't.

Doe steps towards Mills.

SOMERSET
Don't do this!

JOHN DOE
I meant what I said. I admire David Mills. I envy David Mills.
(pause)
Envy is my sin.

SOMERSET
No!

Just as Doe is to put the flame to Mills, the rope is finally cut through. Mills drops, swinging his legs forward, smashing Doe in the face, knocking Doe's glasses off.

Mills hits the floor with a thud.

Somerset runs forward.

SOMERSET (CONT)
David, get out!

Doe has fallen back, dropping the metal pole. Mills scrambles to his feet and charges at Doe, shouting.

Doe squints, screaming, raises his gun. Fires twice!

The bullets catch Mills in mid-run, and carry him off his feet, backwards.

Somerset grips his own gun, just as Mills' body falls, tumbles off the altar area and down the stairs in front of him.

SOMERSET (CONT)
No!

Somerset lets out a scream of pain and rage that chokes in his throat. He falls to his knees and halts Mills' body.

Somerset's shaking, unable to breath, turning Mills over and cradling his head in his arms. Tears come to his eyes.

SOMERSET (CONT)
David... David? Please....

On the altar, Doe throws his gun away. He starts feeling around him, unsteady, looking for his glasses.

Mills' eyes are closed. He is still, bloody. He swallows.

With one gasp, without a word, he is dead.

Somerset looks up at Doe, vision blurred by rage and tears.

Doe stands, putting on his glasses, faces Somerset.

Somerset lays Mills' body down. Stands, walks up towards the altar, raises his gun.

SOMERSET
You.

Doe stands, quaking, teeth clenched, fists balled up. He waits for the bullets, falls to his knees.

The gun trembles in Somerset's hand as Somerset brings the barrel to Doe's face. A millisecond's pause. Somerset changes the angle of fire. BLAM, he blows John Doe's arm to pieces in a splattering explosion.

Doe screams, falling back, on the altar floor.

VIEWED FROM FAR BACK IN THE CHURCH

The entire church with its candles frames the torture:

Somerset walks to where Doe flops horribly, bleeding. Somerset aims, shoots Doe in the leg. Doe screams, rolling, trying to crawl away, knocking over candle racks. Somerset follows. He shoots Doe's other leg. He shoots Doe in the other arm. Flames begin to rise and spread quickly amongst the pews. Doe continues to spasm, wrenching, hand slapping the bloody floor. BLAM, BLAM, BLAM. Somerset steps back from Doe, overturns a rack of candles on top of him. He steps away. Watching. Flames begin rising on Doe's clothing.

CLOSE ON JOHN DOE'S FACE

Doe's face, covered in blood, twisted in agony, helpless, flames rising. He continues screaming.

His glasses crack from the heat.

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH/ORPHANAGE -- NIGHT

Smoke billows from the windows. The fire is moving quickly, ravenous. It's just starting to light up the night.

From the front doors, Somerset walks weeping, carries Mills' body in his arms.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH -- NIGHT

The seven deadly sin tableau burns.

Flames cause the paint to bubble and blacken. Gluttony, greed and sloth are already halfway gone.

Flames eat at pride, lust.

Wrath and envy are being consumed. Wrath goes last. A man with bloodied hands, in tones of blue. Flames devour it.

EXT. CEMETERY -- DAY

A field of blue. Cops in orderly rows. The funeral of David Mills. Many police officials and politicians stand in tribute.

Somerset is here, in his dress blue uniform. He stares forward, still numb, beaten. Rifles are raised by a core of riflemen. Blanks explode from the barrels. They reload in unison.

Somerset looks towards the grave where Mills' casket lies under an American flag. Tracy is there.

Tracy stands surrounded by strangers at the grave-sight. Her head is lowered. She cries. Each blast of the rifle salute causes her to react with a start.

EXT. CEMETERY -- LATER DAY

The funeral is over. Somerset stands at the edge of the graveyard, looking at the distant city. Behind him, the mourners are still filing out to their cars.

The captain approaches. He comes to stand beside Somerset, similarly solemn.

CAPTAIN
I don't know if I should do this.
(pause)
We found the motel room Doe must have been staying in after you found his apartment.

Somerset hasn't acknowledged the captain, still looking away.

CAPTAIN (CONT)
Anyway... we found this in his belongings.

The captain takes out a sealed envelope. Somerset takes it.

On the envelope: DETECTIVE SOMERSET, handwritten, in red marker.

EXT. MILLS' APARTMENT BUILDING -- DAY

Tracy and Somerset stand near a moving truck in front of the apartment building. MOVERS carry Tracy's belonging to the truck. Mills' car is attached to be towed behind.

SOMERSET
I wish I could say something...
(pause)
Something to... I don't know...

TRACY
I'll be okay.

Somerset nods.

SOMERSET
We'll keep in touch. I'll come visit.

TRACY
I'll write to you when we get there.

SOMERSET
Take care of yourself.
(pause)
Take care of the baby.

Tracy nods. There's nothing left for them to say. They're both empty. It's time for them to give a gesture, a kiss, or a hug, to say goodbye, but neither makes the first move.

MOVER
That's all, Mrs. Mills. We got everything.

Mover's latch up the back of the truck while the driver climbs in and fires up the engine.

SOMERSET
Goodbye, Tracy.

TRACY
Goodbye, Somerset.

Somerset walks away. Tracy walks away, gets in the passenger side of the moving truck.

EXT. CITY STREET -- LATER DAY

Sidewalks jammed with people, hurrying. Somerset walks in a fog, hands in his pockets. He stops at a corner, but does not cross. He stands there, looks up.

At the city around him. The buildings towering over him.

At the cars, buses and taxies racing in the streets, blowing their horns and spouting soot.

Somerset reaches into his jacket pocket, takes out the envelope from John Doe. He studies it in his hand.

SOMERSET
(to himself)
Oh... man...

He opens it. He takes out a small note, handwritten. It reads:

PLOW THEM UNDER.

Somerset looks up again, mortified, fighting to keep control of his emotions. He looks around:

At the miserable people, walking past him.

At a man at the top of the subway station stairs, sitting in a cardboard box, holding out a cup, rattling the change inside.

A father passes by, holding his young son's hand. Somerset turns to watch them as they pass. The father reaches to pick the boy up and carry him. The boy holds tight.

For some reason, this makes Somerset ache with sorrow.

The father hugs his son to him, kisses him on the cheek. The boy returns the kiss, with great affection.

Somerset watches them disappear in the mass of humanity. He looks back at the note in his hand.

He tears the note up, into little pieces.

INT. MOVING TRUCK -- DAY

The truck moves along in steady traffic. Tracy sits beside the driver. She looks out at the city across the river.

She reaches into her pocket, takes out a small manila envelope. She opens the envelope and slides two keys on a keychain out into her palm.

She's looking at the keys when she notices something about the envelope. She reopens it, takes out a small folded piece of paper. She unfolds it:

It is the piece of wallpaper with the pale rose at its center.

She smiles very faintly.

EXT. PRECINCT HOUSE -- EARLY EVENING

Cars roll by in the street. Cops come and go.

Somerset walks up the stairs into the precinct house.

END